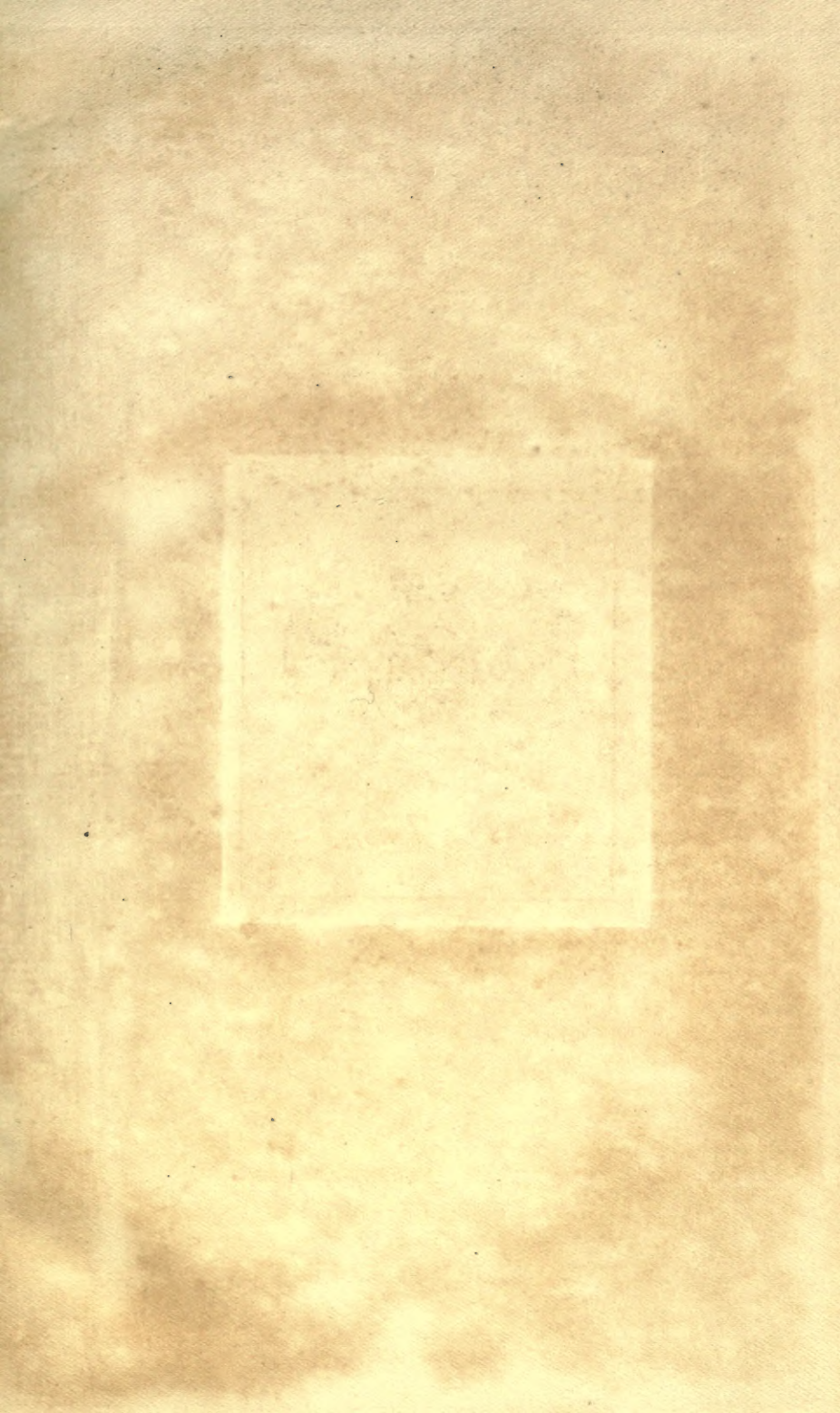





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LETTERS OF GEORGE WYNDHAM



Photographie Arsene Gaspar

Yours ever sincerely
Genl Wyndham

LETTERS OF
GEORGE WYNDHAM

1877-1913

COMPILED BY
GUY WYNDHAM



VOL. I

EDINBURGH: PRIVATELY PRINTED

T. AND A. CONSTABLE

PRINTERS TO HIS MAJESTY

1915

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FOR THOSE WHO LOVE
GEORGE WYNDHAM
AND FOR THE CHILDREN OF THOSE WHO LOVED HIM
THIS COLLECTION OF HIS LETTERS HAS BEEN MADE
BY HIS BROTHER

P R E F A C E

ALTHOUGH a year has passed since George Wyndham died, his nearest relations and friends cannot yet realize their loss.

There are men who give so much, who so completely satisfy the needs of others that they do not only influence the life of these others but become a part of it.

Such men do not die to their friends. Conscious thought may realize their absence, but sub-conscious thought remains pervaded by their sympathy and continues as before to share with them every impression of beauty, action, or endeavour.

It is not time but this continuity of sympathy that blunts the sting of separation.

The preparation of these volumes has so fostered and maintained the sense of intimacy and companionship, that it is hoped that the reading of them may do the same for those for whom they have been prepared.

George Wyndham's letters are not studied compositions, and for that reason they reflect his mind more truly than do his other writings, either in prose or verse. They supply an almost complete record of his every mood, his interests, his aspirations and his ideals.

Living, he wished to share each impression of his full life with his friends; his letters enable us to share them still.

Often at midnight or in the early hours of morning he would commence a letter to a friend with the phrase, 'Now I am going to talk to you'; and, when feeling overtired, the sense of companionship that he derived from

thus imparting his thoughts seems more than anything to have rested his mind. A good gallop with the hounds, dawns and sunsets, his first impressions on reading a book had all to be shared with those who would sympathize, and time was never wanting to send a word of cheer or help to those who knew they might expect one.

At such moments he would place no restraint upon his pen; he would let loose a flood of poetic imagery. Without effort he would pour a

‘full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.’

That which might have been a few lines of thanks for a Xmas gift remains a very lyric of friendship.

From such material a selection could be made of supreme literary excellence, but letters so selected do not present a complete portrait of the man. At best the editor gives but an impressionist picture, sufficiently clever and striking to arrest the attention of the public and to exercise the ingenuity of the critic, but lacking in the essential detail that the intimate few demand—a sketch, not a portrait; suitable for a public gallery, but not for the home.

Here there has been no attempt to select either for form or for matter. Letters have only been omitted to avoid an excess of repetition.

Above all there has been no editing. Expressed opinions that later may have been changed or modified are allowed to stand. His views on the questions of the day and criticism of the action of the various parties are given, but criticism of the action of individuals in politics has been excluded. The punctuation and the use of capital letters—by him used for emphasis—have been retained, and only obvious slips of the pen corrected.

Since his death many beautiful tributes to George

Wyndham have been written, but, touching as these are, they cannot do full justice, for perhaps no one friend knew all of the many sides to his character. These can best be shown by his letters, and these volumes attempt to present an autobiography for his friends.

It was hoped that all his friends would have been represented by letters in this collection, but that has not been possible. The letters to some were considered too personal for even private circulation; those to many—his colleagues—dealt with matters that must be left to the historian in the future; other friends, and alas! they include W. E. Henley, had not been able to preserve their letters.

Nor have the letters to his wife been included in these first volumes. Love letters should be held sacred, and the intimate exchange of thought during a perfect comradeship of twenty-five years calls for careful selection. It is hoped that extracts from them may later be embodied in a supplementary volume.

GUY WYNDHAM.

10.15 p.m., *June 8th*, 1914.

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CORRIGENDA

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- P. 68, l. 20, read 'buck' for 'busk.'
- P. 72, l. 19, read 'horse' for 'purse.'
- P. 134, l. 2, read 'fireplaces' for 'fireplaced.'
- P. 143, ll. 24 and 26, read 'Carletons' for 'Carltons.'
- P. 158, last line but one, read 'Solomon' for 'Soloman.'
- P. 247, l. 7 from end, read 'A great success' for 'I great success.'
- P. 270, l. 19, delete comma.
- P. 315, l. 14, read 'decide' for 'decided.'
- P. 319, l. 25, read 'Temple-Newsome' for 'Temple-Newsam.'
- P. 394, l. 16, read 'Carden' for 'Garden.'
- P. 399 l. 5, read 'Nantwich' for 'Nanturch.'
- P. 406. The date of letter No. 292 should be 1908.
- P. 418, l. 11, read 'Luynes' for 'Luyne.'
- P. 438, l. 8 from end, read 'wind' for 'wing.'
- P. 470, l. 4, read 'Crichton' for 'Crighton.'
- P. 544, l. 20, read 'revered' for 'reverend.'
- P. „ „ read 'liked' for 'like.'

LETTERS

CHAPTER I

APRIL 1877 TO JANUARY 1885

Eton College—Preparing for the University—Paris—At an Army Tutor's—Sandhurst College—Early days in Coldstream Guards.

1

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO HIS PARENTS, FROM
ETON COLLEGE

To his Mother

April 25th, 1877 [aged 13].

We got here all right. My little room is 3 paces and $\frac{1}{4}$ across when it's empty, and now it looks like this [drawing]. I've been out walking after tea, which was made up of a big lump of bread, a pat of butter, a little jug of milk and a teapot of tea, a knife, a slop basin, and a sugar basin, all out of the little cupboard. We saw Papa's room and the room where he breakfasted with another boy, and the owl they burnt on the cupboard. I'm writing by the light of my own candle. It's awful fun having a little room to yourself. I hope Guy got there all right. I'm going to write to him to-morrow evening. I shall not post this till to-morrow. There seems to be nothing but swans, boatmen, tuck shops, and boys in the whole place. There are only four boys come to the house as yet. When the train went away, four new boys, myself among them, were all left standing on the platform. It's a lovely place.

April 28th.

I have taken Remove, as you see from my telegram. Antrobus has asked me to breakfast to-morrow. The

exam. lasted all Thursday, all Friday, and from 7.30 to 9 to-day. The result was put up in Williams' window this afternoon. I was rather surprised, the exam. was harder than I thought, as everybody says it is so easy. You take your place like Remove and then you are arranged in alphabetical order, so I came last as nobody's name began with an X, Y, or Z.

This morning we had a history paper, horribly difficult, as it asked about all times and about people you don't often hear about. I'm an awful cook. I make the tea so nasty I can hardly drink it. The sausages I tried to-night did not look at all like sausages when they came off. I don't think I used enough butter. I have not got to fag yet as it's first fortnight for me. It's such fun. You hear a cry of 'Lower Boys,' and all the 'lower boys' scuttle as fast as they can to the room, because the last has to fag and perhaps go up to the other end of the town for a pair of boots.

Same date, to his Father.

I saw the eight-oars rowing to-day; it looked so beautiful, it took away any regret I had for not being a 'dry bob.' I'm getting to know some of the 'lower boys' in the house. In spite of your advice my tea is very poor stuff, it's quite nasty. I have not played at anything except Fives as yet. The exam. was harder than I expected. 3 boys took third form. I liked the mathematical paper. The verses were rather hard and the history was awful. I wrote a long letter, 3 whole sheets, to 'Guy.'

June 24th.

I am learning to swim and am getting on capitally. The man who teaches, called Bob, says I soon will pass. He asked my name and asked me whether Papa or Uncle Henry was my father, and said he remembered them both. It's such fun bathing at Cuckoo Weir. They jump down on the fellows swimming underneath and duck you.

I'm all right. Some time this week write me (besides

another) rather a formal letter asking me if I could get leave on *Friday next* to go down to Hoddesdon,¹ and then Guy would come up in the evening. In the same letter ask me to get leave from Saturday to Monday. I can do both these once. Don't think it would disturb my work, as in both together I would only lose $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. It's nearly chapel time. My room is beautiful. I liked the Grosvenor Gallery very much. I saw the 'Lamplighter's Courtship.' I wish you could remember the joke about it.

Yesterday the Eton and Winchester was played and the day before; we (the eleven) have not been beaten this half. We beat Winchester by 121 runs in one innings. We got 390 runs in our one innings. 3 Studs are in the eleven and they got 52, 53, 54 runs. Isn't that wonderful? Whitfield got 65, and Portal 92. Wasn't that a drubbing? Chapel rings, so good-bye. We're sure to win 'Eton and Harrow.' We got some mustard and cress growing. We washed them in boiling water with which we were making tea. It spoilt them all and made a beastly sort of porridge, so we threw them out of the window.

October 29th, 1877.

I am getting on beautifully. I'm in my Tutor's² 'lower boy' eleven and have great fun. I have played in two matches, both of which we won, the first by 1 goal and 2 rouges, the second by 5 goals and 3 rouges. I am getting on all right with my Matthew Mattocks. I went to Hoddesdon on St. Luke³ and saw Guy. He was all right and it was great fun. I am so pleased because Papa has got me a horse.

October 1879.

Last Saturday we had a field-day with the Volunteers, and in the evening the first debate at which I have been present of the House Debating Society. The question

¹ His former private school. Mr. Chittenden, The Grange, Hoddesdon, in Hertfordshire. Mr. Arthur Balfour was also educated at this school.

² Mr. R. H. A. Mitchell was his House Master and Tutor.

³ Saints' Days were observed as holidays at Eton.

was 'Was the Afghan War desirable at the time it occurred?' I said it was. I have got everything in my favour for getting on well this half. I am up to Ainger, a very nice clever man, and my Tutor is helping me as much as he can. I am getting on well at football; Guy is playing well too.

October 1879.

I played back-up side-post for the House in a match against 'Carter's' and we won by 2 goals and 1 rouge.

Last Saturday night I opened a debate in the House Debating Society as to whether 'Corporal Punishment ought to be abolished in the Army and Navy.' I said it ought not. The debate was very one-sided as the seconder was the only one who said that it ought to be abolished, except one who thought it ought only to be abolished in the Navy and so went behind the chair. Most of the debate was spent in pitching into him about the Navy.

We are both all right.

October 22nd, 1879.

We are both getting on all right. The first week I was 22nd in the division, the second I was 15th, and now I am 10th. If I can manage to stick where I am, I shall be very much pleased.

Played in a match last Thursday, very stiff one. We only won by 1 rouge. Friday I played again and Saturday was a field-day, with a lecture in the evening and House Debating Society after that, so I am rather fagged out and stiff with a cold.

December 11th, 1879.

Last Tuesday week we played the 2nd ties for the house cup, and won by 2 rouges to nothing. The ground is frightfully hard owing to frost. Last Monday we played the 3rd ties, in which we had to play Arthur James's. They are very strong and are considered the second best house, but contrary to all expectation we tied them, neither of us getting anything. 'Me Tutor' was wild

with excitement, as they are individually much better than us, but we prevented their beating us by playing well together and charging. This is what he likes best and is always talking about. To-morrow we have to play them *again*, and I am frightfully excited about it and can't think of anything else (so write to you so as you can know what I'm thinking about). A secondary consideration is that if we win I *may* get my 'colours,' this being the highest of all everythings! But I am afraid we shall be beaten.

I write all this about football because you say you like to know what I am most thinking of. In the work for the week before 'Trials' ¹ I was 6th! I hope I continued the running into the next week, but the week *after* I was 12th. You must not mind this as the reaction is terribly strong and I can hardly do anything now and feel quite stupid (the thought of 'Collections' ² is like getting into a cold bath a second time in this weather).

December 15th, 1879.

We did not win our match. We played well and they only got on our line once. The umpire then gave them a very doubtful rouge, which owing to the slipperiness of the ground they turned into a goal. We very nearly scored during the last quarter of an hour and had it all our own way. The match was very fast, I am still stiff from it. Most of the spectators and some of their own side say it was not a rouge. I have now no chance of my 'colours,' but still I am very pleased at the amount we have done, and now only hope that our victors will win the cup and so show how good we were.

February 1880.

The frost has gone at last, and we have been out with the beagles this week. It is very great fun but hard work. As a matter of fact there is only *one* beagle, all the others being harriers, twice as big and much too fast. There

¹ The annual examination for promotion to a higher form.

² The examination at the end of each term.

are great rejoicings at 'My Tutor's' over the Liverpool election, My Tutor was bubbling over with it at dinner to-day. So the Queen did open Parliament after all. Thank you for that book; 'My Tutor' has just come in and taken it up and laughed at it. The other night we had a debate 'Generals or Statesmen, which benefit their country most?' I seconded for Statesmen, but Generals won by 1 vote. Guy is all right.

I'm afraid I shan't be high in school work this half. I work as much as usual, but I am stupider than usual and apparently can't do as good Latin prose and translation as I could last half. I get on well personally with Austen-Leigh, but he says I'm sleepy. He is very fond of Greek Iambics, which I have never done in my life. I have begun 'Pickwick' again.

*May 20th, 1880.*¹

We got here all right, just before chapel, and changed and washed again before school; we neither of us had headaches. In the afternoon two fellows rowed me up to Surly and we bathed coming down.

Last night, when 'My Tutor' came round after prayers, Guy was hanging over his bed asleep, so 'My Tutor' went and thumped him saying 'Wake up! Wake up! you'll be late for the next dance.' I suppose I looked very sleepy too when I answered, because to-day at dinner 'My Tutor' began quite gravely, 'Ah! who is the best draughtsman in the house? Somebody ought to draw a picture of the Wyndham family after a ball. I found the "minor" last night in his clothes sleeping on his bed, and the "major" snoring against the wall.' We are both very short of money (I've got exactly 11½d. left) so will you send us some now, as there is more than a week before the 4th. I meant to ask Monday but forgot about it.

It was hard work beginning verses about laying the foundation stone of the cathedral at Truro with the tunes

¹ The two brothers had been given leave to attend a ball at Belgrave Square on the occasion of their eldest sister 'coming out.'

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO HIS PARENTS 7

ringing in my head. 'Why is the city bright with flags and flowers? The noble son of the Queen commences the first walls; men with happy faces run together; the priest in white robes and guards and ladies in varied garments,' etc., etc.

June 27th, 1880.

I went to Winchester on Thursday. It was great fun. The country is just like Wiltshire. The match was most exciting, Eton winning by 9 runs. We all had dinner in Hall afterwards, which was great fun, and we made a lot of row in the train going back, hoisting a 'bobby' amongst other amusements.

I was elected Secretary of the Debating Society instead of Curzon; Guy consequently prophesies that the debating book will be lost.

September 23rd, 1880.

I am all right but rather lame in my left hip from a strain. I have played every day with a good deal of success, but I am awfully afraid of getting stale before the matches begin. 'I feel such a swell,' I am 2nd in the House and in the 3rd division of the school. It's so nice when you come back finding such *lots* of friends. I am *already* beginning to feel melancholy about leaving.

October 18th, 1880.

We played a House match to-day against C. C. James's and beat them by 2 goals. This half, and this week particularly, has been a most fatal one for injuries. There are no less than 4 in the school eleven who have had to stop playing, 2 with their knees out, one with a broken ankle, and another with a sprained knee. Another boy and a master have both sprained their ankles so much that they have to be strapped up and cannot play. And this afternoon a boy called Dickenson put his elbow out, and Rawlins, a Master, had his leg clean broken.

November 23rd, 1880.

This is a day eventful in the history of the world. We played a match against our 'Old Boys' to-day, and to-night

I got my 'colours.' I am writing to you now still drunk with the joy and excitement, so hide the letter when you have read it, as I shall think it very silly if I ever see it again. I had just succeeded in almost stopping expecting them just yet, and to-day was not half so excited as the match was not for the cup and I did not expect to get them. But to-night going up to my room with Para,¹ he said 'You can have your colours, you were in tremendous form to-day.' This was about a quarter of an hour ago. To-morrow when I have ordered them, I shall wreak vengeance on my old cap and burn it with state.

December 9th, 1880.

We won our match on Wednesday by 1 goal and 3 rouges to nothing. This was a great victory, particularly as we were 'bows.' We never even had to kick off. It was very hard work, and awfully exciting. I was so glad, particularly as I had the luck to come off myself, scoring the rouge that was turned into a goal, and 2 others out of the 4 we got, so I proved that I ought to have got my 'colours' first. We are, therefore, one of the last 3 Houses in, and to crown our luck, we have drawn blank! and so will play in the *Final*.

2

To his Mother

MANOR HOUSE,
LIMPSFIELD, *Friday, February 18th, 1881.*

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I have not written for fear of letting off the explosion too soon, which you must expect at the end of the three weeks. Strict is not the word for this place, but I don't mind that so much as that from Bell down to the fellows there is not one I care for; they are not offensive, but so very unlike everyone I know. Three of them I knew at Eton, but did not cultivate them,

¹ P. J. Paravicini.

thinking them too stupid. Now I have to depend on them for my society. Bell himself is a huge, stooping, red-haired, red-bearded, radical Scotchman. The only time I can stand him is when he is teaching. Do not think that I am going to kick up ; I take the greatest care to observe all rules and have not been late yet, but what I do want is for you to think if I can't leave here at Easter. If I come up to see you in four or five weeks, I will convince you. Although the hours for work are long, nobody except those cramming hard for exams. do anything but sit in their rooms ; the latter work all night. There are too many here (15) for three men to teach well, as they are all doing different things. The hours are horrid and keep you about the place all day ; we have to come to 8 o'clock breakfast, then work from 9 to 1.15, then lunch ; then work from 5-6, dinner 6.30, work from 8-10 ; but work means sitting in your room doing anything you have to do for four or five hours out of the 7.

I saw Walter Bourke at Petworth and he said that he worked very hard at Faithful's ; there there is a man to every four or five always working with them. Do think this over. Bell's is only a place for cramming at. At Easter there are only two weeks' holidays, so unless you kept me, I shouldn't see you. If you can let me come back when Guy does, a week before Easter, then I could matriculate from home, (Bell says I can do it now) and then send me somewhere else in the Summer, anywhere else. If you think of this, I really will work here till then and keep on trying to repress myself.

I'm afraid I have exploded before my three weeks, I will do so again then. Last night I saw a man riding home in a red coat ; it made my heart sink. Will you send all my shirts, collars, stockings, my felt hat and anything else you find, as soon as you can. I never have felt so depressed since I left Chittenden's ; but don't think that makes me dislike the place ; I couldn't live through the Summer here.

Good-bye.—Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

3

To his Father

MANOR HOUSE, LIMPSFIELD,
SURREY, *Saturday, March 4th, 1881.*

MY DEAR PAPA,—I got the last parcel all right, but the one with my House scarf in it was lost, as I haven't got it. Yesterday I got an invitation, which you forwarded, to a ball on last Tuesday, from a Mrs. Graham. Did Mary go to it, and who is she? This place isn't near Holmbrook, but some other Leveson-Gowers live close here at Litsay. Kearney, the mathematical, teaches me well, but is not so good a man as Locke himself. Bell likes me. I go to him every evening from 8-9 and construe the books I have for matriculation, but I usually make him talk for about half the time, and try to convince him that Eton is the best school.

They feed us very well here. At breakfast, something hot, and a boiled egg and marmalade; lunch, cold beef and marmalade and beer; dinner, soup, sherry, roast beef, tarts, beer, cheese, butter, sherry, coffee. Mrs. Bell was a governess. She tries to do popular things and is liked pretty well, but she too has a bad temper; it is owing to her that we get enough to eat. They give us 4.30 tea as well. There are two fellows here now reading for the army, but I don't think Bell teaches spelling well, and he has given it up now altogether.

Write for me to go for leave to you in about two weeks, because I want to talk about the army and exams. I suspect Bell will try to keep me if he can. I have now settled down to my quiet life, and look back to hunting and balls with calm resignation.

The little girl here has got a very bad temper and kicks and screams if anyone speaks to her. We all use the drawing room and play on the piano, but Bell can't bear dance music, and comes raging down if any is played. On Saturday night we sing songs. On other nights we play whist, draughts, and read the papers till 8, and then

work. At first I sat up late, but now I go to bed as early as I can. I suspect I shall be very fat and lazy by Easter. The holidays will begin on the Thursday before Easter, in about six weeks. I told Bell that I didn't want to stay right up to my exam. and he said he thought I should get through. I must say I think it would be better for me to go to a more 'Army' place, and I should like to talk about this with you soon. The nuisance here is that you can't make fellows do things, and when everybody wishes to play football, two or three won't. Bell frequently tells me long rigmaroles about all the fellows he has sacked: there is one consolation for these, that he always speaks of them in the most tender way, as if they were his dearest friends. They wouldn't keep Sturt, Lord Allington's son; consequently both Mr. and Mrs. Bell are continually talking about 'Humph,' as they call him, and saying how fond they were of him.

Bell is very careful of his money and beseeches you not to waste his bread and butter, and informs everyone that he and Mrs. Bell only live on £50 a year, and that £100 worth of butter is eaten at this table. He nearly breaks my leg every time we play football; but is most delicate in his attentions at dinner, piling my plate with meat, and pouring me out beer. He seems very pleased to get someone to talk to and show his coins to.

Give my love to Mamma and the others. Good-bye.—
Your affectionate son, GEORGE.

P.S.—I can't run 'dark' any longer. Bell asked me to-night whether I was coming back after Easter; I said I did not know for certain; I don't want to go back and you say I needn't, so will you let him know?

4

To his Father

MANOR HOUSE,
LIMPSFIELD, Wednesday, March 24, 1881.

MY DEAR PAPA,—I got here all right and found the same number as when I left. I went to lunch with Aunt

Mary ; the little girl was dressed in a sort of many coloured jersey with a blue skirt, and when I had been there a few minutes, Aunt Mary made her stand up and asked what character in French history she reminded me of. She looked fierce and dishevelled, so I said Charlotte Corday ; but it turned out that it ought to have been Joan of Arc. I told Bell I was going abroad, and he advised me out of his own head to stay at Paris for a month. I saw the list of the voting of the Division on Candahar ; I think it's monstrous. I saw in the papers that on next Saturday there is going to be a morning performance of the ' Corsican Brothers & Co.' at the Gaiety, so you could see it. Gilbert and Sullivan have a new comic opera at Easter about æstheticism ; don't you think it would be fun to get seats for the first night and clap them ?

5

To his Mother

April 18th, 1881.

MY DEAR MAMMA,—Here I am at Paris. Give my love to everybody. To-day we are going to a sale at the 'Tattersall' of 'chevaux qui ont chassé, sautent très bien, aptes à être des steeple-chasers.' To-morrow we are going to races. Fraülein¹ and I travelled all the way here together, it was great fun. We met a man in France, and 'blowed' if he didn't call his hat a 'Shappo' ; but I suppose that came of his not speaking English.

Good-bye.—Your affectionate

GEORGE.

6

To his Mother

44 RUE MARBŒUF,
CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, *May 7th, 1881.*

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I had a beautiful crossing, and a big lunch at Calais. This place is certainly middle-class.

¹ Fraülein Schneider.

When I got here I was rather afraid it was the wrong house ; it is down a poky little street about 20 ft. below the level of the others ; two or three ' *bonnes* ' and a small creature dressed completely in white came out ; eventually I was taken to a tiny little room with a board floor, and all the furniture covered up. M. Duplay entered in a greasy black coat, cap with a tassel, and large slippers. He thought my name was Monsieur Percie, but I put him right ; he afterwards told me that he had thought ' Wyndham ' was the name of a small town near London. Madame Duplay, who certainly is *very* middle-class, appeared at dinner with two badly dressed, dirty little children who both had colds and snivelled. Dinner consisted of cabbage water with lumps of bread in it, a small leg of mutton with several slices out of it, heated up again, some stewed peas and half a pot of strawberry jam. The wine was very light, scenty tasted. My room was calculated to depress one, with a board floor, four bare walls, and a small bed in the corner ; the window is small, and the frousty smell of the town of Hyères pervades it. There is no room in the house to sit in except the dining room, at one end of which M. Duplay appears to work continually at plans. As sitting on a cane chair in a bare room is rather melancholy, I started yesterday at 12 o'clock and walked and walked till I was nearly dead, and had to go into the Tennis Court to rest. Eventually I called on Barrington at the Embassy, who told me of a cheap and good café, and other things. At about 5 I was so beat, from walking in the sun, that I took a fiacre and drove in the Bois, and then home. The dinner was better to-night, but of small dimensions ; however, I wasn't hungry. In the evening I went and saw ' *La Mascotte*.' The first night after dinner I went out with M. Duplay, and as far as I can see, the only thing after 6.30 dinner is to go out, as my room is too uncomfortable to stop in. I am going to do French with him in the morning.

Send me my cigars and a pair of boots which were not packed up. Perhaps you had better send me Marie de

l'Aigle's address. I don't know what on earth to do to-day.

Give my love to everybody, and make Mary write about everything that happens and the people she sees.

Good-bye.—Your affectionate

GEORGE.

7

To his Mother

44 RUE MARBŒUF,
CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, May 13, 1881.

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I have been here a week now. On Monday I played Lawn Tennis at Madame Trubert's. It was so funny, just like in England seven years ago, only worse. A Monsieur de la Roche something or other, with close-cropped red hair, very smart, held his racquet the wrong way and didn't even serve once over the net during two sets. In the evening I went to the Opera, to 'Le Tribut de Zamora,' by Gounod; it was very magnificent. However, there were only three little bits in which I could catch any tune. Last night I went to the Comédie Française with Charles Sartoris, to see the 'Mariage de Figaro.' It was very good, but I ought to have read it before, particularly as the first act was just over when we got there. I went to the 'Salon' with M. Duplay the other day, it was very funny. The number of perfectly revolting pictures of people with their heads cut off was very large. There was one picture like a nightmare of a man tied down, with the ropes cutting his wrist and waist and ankles, with a bandage over his eyes and blood trickling down, fixed on a stove with smoke coming out, his feet over a hot fire, toasting a rich purple colour with all the veins swollen. There are also a few most funny æsthetic pictures on dirty gold backgrounds, of men and women who are literally *green*, with no pretence to pink about them.

To-day I am going again to the Lawn Tennis. Two Miss D'Harcourts (I think) play, who I believe are the daughters of the Ambassador in London a few years ago.

Will you see how that racquet is getting on at Beach's and have the letters stuck on? Tell Pamela she will have to wait for her 'Philippine' till I come back. (All right, I've got it.) Also send one pair of boots.

The place is full of English and Americans. I have got used to talking French now, but at the Opera, being with ladies in evening dress and all that, I kept beginning sentences in English, and found it very hard to talk sense in French. Give my love to everybody, and *make* Mary write about what she is doing. I am so glad that I am coming to the 'Hut'¹ with you. Write soon.

Good-bye.—Your affectionate GEORGE.

8

To his Sister, Mary

44 RUE MARBŒUF,
Wednesday, 18th May 1881.

MY DEAR MARY,—Thanks for your letter.

[Drawing.]

This is the picture of the very large and aged white horse I hired yesterday to create a sensation with in the Bois. I think I must have succeeded. He was very white and all his hair came off on to me in two minutes; he could only trot in a very jolting way, and turned bang round like a circus horse whenever he met other horses trotting or cantering. I met Mademoiselle Trubert and her mother, and rode with them. I played Tennis again to-day with them, and had a long conversation in French with the two Mlles. D'Harcourt. Madame Trubert has asked me to a dance next Sunday. I will tell you how I got on amongst the Frenchys; here the proper thing is to take off your hat in your left hand, keep it off and shake hands with your right; it requires some practice to do this gracefully to everybody at a Lawn Tennis party, with a stick and gloves, after having been handed two racquets to choose from. I am going to ride again to-morrow, but I have blown them up well and told

¹ Lady Queensberry's house near Wokingham.

them I must have the smartest horse they have got. When is our ball? Mr. Sartoris is going to get me asked to a ball at the Continental Hotel on the 9th of June. I have long talks with Duplay about the Tunisian question. I saw the other night the best thing I have ever seen, the new piece 'Le monde où l'on s'ennuie' at the 'Français.' Everybody here is mad about it; you have to pay 15 fr. to see it from a contractor, or wait for 3 weeks. All the best actors and actresses act. And all the parts are splendid. I am going to buy the words and read them and then send them to Papa: of course the acting does most of it. I shall go again soon. To-day I got a letter asking me to déjeuner from Lord 'Castlerosse,' I think; I haven't the slightest idea who he is, and I don't suppose he knows us very well as he spelt my name with an i. When people ask you like that they ought to tie a 'ruban' round their hats. How is Saffron [a horse], is he admired? . . . I have just had déjeuner with the unknowns. His Mother (?) was Lady Kenmare. There was also another man who is apparently a young man of feeble intellect; he asked me what plays were good, said he had been to 'Divorçons' but had not seen the point of it, as he mistook the first piece for its first Act, and then went out after the second thinking it was all over.

Give my love to everybody. Good luck never comes singly. Madame Robert de l'Aigle, who is a patroness, is going to send me a ticket for a big Charity Ball at the Continental to which everybody is going.

Good-bye.—Your aff(able)

GEORGE.

Thank Mamma for her letter.

9

To his Sister, Mary

44 RUE MARBŒUF,

CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, *May 28th*, 1881.

MY DEAR MISS MOGGY,—Write and tell me everything about our ball. I thought about it last night, and I wonder you didn't see my ghost enter in full dress at 11.30.

Monday night I went to an enormous charity ball at the Continental; nearly 3000 people were there of all kinds, all the swells, also the rich tradesmen and floods of Americans.

Sunday I shall go and see the French Derby.

‘I am the gay Than-tilly Zadida,
My name it is Billy.’

One room at the ball was lighted with electric light, it was not *very* objectionable, and not so hot. I only knew 3 people to dance with, so I only danced $5\frac{1}{2}$ times. It was quite perfection, a parquet floor room 60 yards long and crowded enough to make the steering very difficult, but possible. It lasted all night. Mr. Sartoris was *absolutely* going on Wednesday morning, so as to see our ball, and said good-bye to all his friends; however, to-day I got a card from him asking me to come and see him.

I went Monday to Lawn Tennis, but was prevented from distinguishing myself, as in the 2nd game I bust both buttons off my trousers. I finished the set with my left hand gracefully placed behind my back, (really tugging at my braces). My chief difficulty was in picking up balls.

Here, when you are introduced to mothers and their daughters at balls, you have to leave cards on them all! fancy, how awful! Luckily Madame de l’Aigle made me give her some of mine and left them for me, which was very good of her. I find my conversation in French is limited to 2 or 3 subjects; and notice that I talk about exactly the same thing in the same words to everybody. I think I shall write a conversation book, ‘Guide to the French Ball-room.’

Con. 1^{er}. On taking your partner to dance.

GEN: J’espère que vous comprenez ce que je dis.

LADY: Mais oui, Mons., vous parlez très bien le Français.

GEN: Ah non, je le trouve très difficile.

LADY: Vous êtes ici depuis longtemps.

GEN : 15 jours. (Change of subject.) Je le trouve très amusant. (Original idea.) Je trouve que Paris est beaucoup plus amusant pour les Anglais que Londres pour les Français, ça doit être très triste.

Then if the Lady has been to London, you talk about what she did there, such as the Tower, National Gallery, trips to Gravesend in a steamboat. She will then express surprise at finding you know very little about this, etc., etc.

When I see you I will tell you the other subjects. Give my love to everybody, and write soon. Here they don't allow girls even to go to have tea without their chaperones. I expect soon to find that you have to dance with one on each arm.

Good-bye.—Your 'affable' brother

GEORGE.

10

To his Mother

STORRINGTON,

SUSSEX, June 24th, 1881.

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I have settled down very comfortably here. It's a capital place to work at, as you have a first class man teaching you, and not more than one or two others at most all day long. I'm sure Timmy¹ would learn a lot here. And though they have been having a great reform, it's not too strict to be put up with. They call you at 7.30, breakfast goes on from 8.30-9.10, after that you stand a very poor chance of getting anything to eat; then you work from 9.15 till 1 o'clock with 15 minutes off at 11. Lunch at 1.30, work 2.30 to 4.30, tea at 5, supper at 8, and you have to be in at 10. The food is extravagantly good; you feel as if you were always lunching at some function, like an agricultural show. The working hours, you see, are not very long, but 5 hours out of it I am taught *alone* by a man, so I learn a tremendous lot, and it's very hard work. I have ridden every day

¹ Lord Henry Paulet, afterwards Marquis of Winchester.

on the downs with the other riding fellows here ; there is a mile course, and hurdles, put up for training race horses ; we race over these and have great fun. Yesterday I rode a hurdle race on a horse that won't jump, so at the first hurdle, as I led, she bolted crossways, and the other man jumped into my leg and sent us both *through* the hurdle together without either getting a fall.

I live in a little cottage with one other fellow, with two bedrooms and a sitting room. You eat at 'messes' in different houses ; it's an awful scramble, as directly it's ready everybody rushes in, puts all he can on his plate, bolts it, and then goes ! In spite of the rule about dogs, there is a small pack consisting of five fox terriers, three dandies, three dachshunds, one collie, one mastiff and two mongrels, besides some of the pet beagles who walk about the streets. The only amusement on Sunday is sitting on the ledges of the ground floor windows in the street, smoking, with all these dogs, waiting out the interval between meals and Divine services.

Give my love to everybody. Good-bye.

GEORGE.

11

To his Mother

R.M.C., FARNBOROUGH STATION,
December 14th, 1882.

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I have just finished the last paper of the exam. Johnny is much better, and will be moved to Bournemouth on Saturday. The Riding prize was a great surprise for everyone, as we were given no proper test and just marked for our position ; a complete outsider won it, Craven and Fairtlough 2nd with 195, and self 4th with 190 marks. Brooke, the riding-master, and the Sergeant-Major were very disgusted with the result. To-morrow we ride before the Duke and all the Rank, Swells, and Beauty in the county, so hope shall not be kicked off. I have promised to dine in London with a lot of the fellows here, and will come to hunt by the

6 o'clock train on Saturday; but all my friends are under arrest, so unless they are let out I shall arrive at Wilbury at 6 o'clock to-morrow, when my luggage will arrive in any case. This arrest business is most absurd. Mackenzie and seven others were out on Sunday *three weeks* ago with some of their dogs, and hunted a rabbit up on the ground we survey over all the year round, and on which there is no game; their names were taken by a watcher, so Mackenzie told the Colonel at once, who thought it a good joke. However, now Prince Christian's C. R. (who is Ranger) Secretary has written to the General to say no one is to hunt there, as a Mr. Simmonds has the right to shoot over it, and the General has put them all under arrest and says he'll keep them there, no one can understand the reason. You'd better write to your School of Art Princess to make her husband let them out.

Give my love to everyone.

Good-bye.—Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

12

To his Mother

SCHOOL OF MUSKETRY,
HYTHE, *Friday, March 7th, 1884.*

MY DEAR MAMMA,—I am very sorry about Chang. I got my leave all right by going about cap in hand all Monday; it was a great business getting there and back, but I enjoyed my ride very much. I was very pleased with Vandyck, but I was never in it as regards winning, as there were five horses in of a much faster class, only one of which (Harry Wickam's) fell. The course was $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles straight, all grass but one field; it was flagged. We had 14 starters; I went steadily for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, then it became great fun as there were 10 of us all together for about a mile, going very fast and jumping close together; after this, Pole-Carew, Mildmay, Douglas Dawson and Lambton drew ahead, I followed fifth as a connecting link 40 yards behind; Leigh, Fortescue,

Legge and Drummond behind me. I made an effort to catch the leaders about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from home, but found Vandyck was not fast enough. The last fence, 100 yards from the finish, was an open brook; I got to it 5th, but Vandyck refused, having had enough, he could not have got over. Legge's horse went in. Leigh and Codrington jumped it and passed us. So Fortescue, Drummond and self stopped. Poor Bouverie fell and put his shoulder out, but had it pulled in all right. Barton and Wickam fell too. Mills was refused with early. It was a great success, as they meant the course for a big one, but 10 out of the fourteen got round as far as the brook within 100 yards of each other (from the 1st to the 10th). Dawson (Coldstream) won, and Carew (Coldstream) won the light weight too. We had 8 starters out of 14, so we did well. I got back at 1.30 last night. There was not room for me in barracks, so I am in lodgings with Du Cane, close by; this is rather a good thing as we have a sitting room. We get leave from Friday night till Sunday. On Saturday the Drag goes at 10 in the morning, then after riding we are going on the coach to Sandown for the Military races, so we ought to have fun. We are not going to get leave, however, on Saturday week.

Give my love to all.—Your loving

GEORGE.

13

To his Mother

HUNTLY LODGE,
HUNTLY, August 26th, 1884.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—In answer to your last question, I think I do know how much you love me. Your theory of my illness coming on at Stanway, and even before, is, I think, quite true, as I felt very odd the day I arrived there, with my chocolate box. I was delighted to hear you were pleased with a sketch you had done, as I know it must be good if that is the case, and am looking forward very much to seeing it and appropriating it if possible. (Friday is

my birthday, more by token.) Whenever I have been ill I have always noticed that once on the way to recovery, I make tremendous strides and astonish the doctors. I took a great turn for the better the day before yesterday, and have got on tremendously both yesterday and to-day ; everything that went wrong is going right as fast as it can, and my body is no longer yellow ; I feel as if you had been defrauded of a real treat in not having had the nursing of me, as the outward and visible signs of this complaint are so *very marked*, and would have delighted your medical mind. I am really quite well now. Yesterday I walked quite jollily, not dragging one foot after the other, as before. I wanted to leave on Thursday and get home on Friday night, but perhaps it will be better to wait till Saturday, when I am *determined* to start. The journey is quite easy ; I shall get a sleeping carriage through to London from Perth to myself, and go on to Wilbury on Sunday. Nothing will put me quite right now but getting home and being jolly, as if I stay here I shall stagnate and fall a prey to boredom after escaping jaundice. Please get a few books ready for me at Wilbury, as I think I feel rather inclined to read, and it would be a pity to throw away the chance of the advantages of such a 'phase.' I think I should like to read 'Voltaire's' works and 'Bolingbroke' the statesman. I hope there are plenty of partridges at Wilbury, as I shall be quite well enough to shoot them. The people here are extraordinarily kind and different from any I have met before. 'Tea-dinner on Sunday,' and talk about the Sermon, just like one hears about. I read the 'Wizard's Son,' the vulgarity of it *astonished* me, I nearly gave it up in the 2nd volume ; it is a pity as the main idea is good, and some of the dialogue between Enadeen and the Wizard very clever. Minute descriptions of a place like Sloebury, and the failings of its inhabitants, give as much pleasure as a Dutch picture of rotten fish.

Give my love to all.—Your loving

GEORGE.

14

To his Mother

EATON, CHESTER,

Thursday, January 22nd, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I liked your letter very much, I like your loving me as much as that, though there is nothing to be proud of. I am *so* sorry about Mrs. Gladstone. The news of the Battle 'Abu Klea' is very interesting, Regie Talbot and all our five, Boscawen, Lawley, V. and D. Dawson, and H. Amherst, were all in it. I am *so sorry* though, that my friend Gough with whom I used to dine at the Staff College and met so often out with the drag, has been killed. He was so nice and kind to me when I was at Sandhurst. His horse was killed at Tel-el-kebir and now he is killed himself. It seems odd that Burnaby should be killed, one had almost got to think that he could not be, but it shows that even very brave people who run many risks are killed in the long run. Airlie is very lucky, as 'slightly wounded' never means much and yet it helps to make his profession appear a serious one. It always seems ridiculous to me that all soldiers should not be wounded sometimes, since a 'Soldier' in Shakespere or any other poet is always a person who bears a hundred scars. The Duke is very kind. We were to have ridden to-day but the frost, alas! has begun again. I am quite sure I do not like Gothic Architecture; Boehm is here and Hitchens, the artist, so I steal about and listen to what they say. Watts' Statue is up. Splendid, I think, so full of movement. It looks best as you drive past the really fine wrought-iron gates, inside which it is placed on a pedestal in the centre of a piece of water. It looks wonderfully well from all points of view. However there is one hind leg about the position of which controversy has raged, consequently all visitors mass themselves behind this leg and gaze at it. I do not think they have looked at any other side—yet. The disks of porphyry and antique marble

in the floor of the hall, and the panels of alabaster let into green serpentine on the walls, I like, but there is a wretched, mean, conventional cornice, that catches your eye and spoils all. This is the case all through the house. The library is a beautiful room with a really good ceiling, gold and white panels with big oak beams crossing it every 15 feet or so, all very nice, but on the gold are stencilled 'Fleurs-de-Lys' which Pamela and I could have designed in an afternoon by doubling paper and cutting them out with scissors. There is a big chapel and clock-tower like Houses of Parliament, with clock, value 20,000 guineas, that plays 48 tunes, the same tune every hour for a whole day, (Maddening !); to-day we had 'Jenny Jones' yesterday 'Home sweet Home.'

Love to all.—Your very loving,

GEORGE.

CHAPTER II

FEBRUARY TO AUGUST 1885

Active Service.

15

To his Mother

S.S. MANORA,

February 19th, 1885, 9 p.m.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am sending this by the pilot who will leave us at the Isle of Wight to-morrow morning at 5 a.m. It seems years since this morning. Several launches came down the river to Gravesend with us, and all the people lunched on board before we started; we shall all have nightmares to-night of crowds on bridges and ships, cheering, half hidden in the fog. This is a beautiful ship, quite new, lighted by electricity. I do not suppose that any expedition since the days of Roman Governors of Provinces has started with such magnificence, we might be Anthony going to Egypt in a purple-sailed Galley. It has all been much more beautiful and wonderful than even I expected. It is *quite* calm; the fog lifted before we got to Gravesend and all the country and Tilbury fort looked lovely. I have been smoking on the deck since dinner, there is a lovely moon reflected in the sea, and stars, with the masts pointing up into the sky apparently as still as if entranced. We have passed the lights of Folkestone and Hythe and are now opposite Dungeness. You will not hear from me again for some time as we shall not stop a moment even to throw letters to a ship till we get to Port Said. *N.B.*—Letters posted before *Tuesday* will catch us at Port Said; and posted before *Friday* (to-morrow) week, at *Suez*.¹ Papa looked

¹ In the Appendix (A) to this volume will be found the letter that his father wrote to him on his departure.

so nice in his brown coat looking on at our start from Westminster, the last 100 yards to the stairs was a fearful struggle. We were half hidden in steam as we pushed off. I felt like a fairy in the transformation scene of a pantomime more than anything else, and now have a rooted belief that I am acting in the 'Pinafore.' It has been so smooth that I can swagger about being a good sailor, and even should this not continue you will not hear of my failing, as there being no post, no one can 'let the cat out of the bag'!! Give my very best love to darling Chang and ask her to write when she is better. Tell Lady Wemyss how sorry I am to have missed saying Good-bye to her. I never felt better in my life than to-night but am getting too sleepy to write sense. Good-bye, darling Mamma, I do love you. Tell me when you write about all the other people I love.—Your loving,

GEORGE.

16

To his Mother

S.S. MANORA,

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 1885, 3.30 p.m.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I wonder how you all are? I am *very well* only *bored*. I hate the sea. It is better to-day as we have the mountains in Africa to look at, very steep and rugged in outline. Yesterday we ought to have seen the Sierras in Spain all day, but though in the Mediterranean of 'Coerulean' fame, it was horribly cold and cloudy all day and we could not see a yard. We have been unlucky, as to-day is the first day we have not had a head wind. I dislike being 'cribbed, cabined and confined' in the ship, but that is not all, the 'boundless ocean' is such a fraud, it is bounded on every side by a narrow circular horizon, so that I feel as if I was sitting on a sixpence in space. (*N.B.*—I do not really hate the sea, and indeed like it when there is land in sight to look at, as it looks all the more beautiful and tempting.) The

only sunshine we have had was on Monday morning, that was really beautiful. We passed Cape St. Vincent at 11 a.m. within a quarter mile, sheer rocks of a reddish brown, with blue sea and blue sky and all sorts of amusing bays and inlets and jutting points and 'hogible' dark holes and caves in them, with great fountains of spray thrown miles high, (there was a tremendous Atlantic swell). The signal station is an old mud-built convent perched on the highest rock with a red roof to one tower, looking desolate and unearthly, black holes for windows, and a mud wall shutting it off from the land but open towards the sea, the last habitation of Europe, like one of Doré's grim pictures. The sun was shining very bright as we passed, there were any number of large and small gulls and green cormorants looking quite black. We were followed by porpoises, the men cheered them as they jumped out of the water. One of the same company's (B.I.S.N.) steamers passed us, they made us out and cheered tremendously, so we had quite a morning's dissipation. It is just possible that I may be able to send this from Malta to-morrow. In my first letter I said it was smooth, but not for long. The next day it was rough in the channel, and we had a tremendous roll on along the coast of Spain; directly we turned the corner the wind turned too and headed us again, so then we stopped rolling and began pitching; off Gibraltar she stood on her head with the screw out of water, it made a fearful noise, woke me up and nearly threw me out on to the floor. I have not been sick but felt very miserable on Saturday when we rolled, so I took two pills and have been all right since then. I am in a tiny cabin with Milligan, fortunately he is small; I took the top berth. The first morning I put my hands on the edge and vaulted airily out, landing 'all seated' on the corner of the wash-hand stand; it was very painful, I now crawl up and down very carefully. All the crew are black and the waiters too (Hindoos), they all answer to the name of 'Abdool.' I thought it was Hindoostani for 'waiter' for some time. The horses look very dear, each in a

little house with their heads sticking out in a row. There is also a cow who supplies the whole ship, and three very strong sheep, kept, I presume, with a view to 'kidneys for breakfast.' As meals are the only diversion I am very glad we have turned the corner. When we were going East, you see, the time kept getting slower so we had longer and longer waits, now the meals keep toppling one on top of the other delightfully. I have read 'Wild Tribes of the Soudan' by James, and liked it very much. I began 'Life in the Soudan' by Josiah Williams to-day. I thought it odd, when glancing down the contents, that in both these travels a servant called Jules should have died in the beginning, and went on to find out that it is written by another man (the doctor) of the *same party*, about the *same expedition* !

Friday, February 27th.

I retract all I have said against the sea. Yesterday and last night were too wonderful. Bright blue sea all day just like Hyères ; in the morning we went between Galoeta and Galatona, two rocky islands, the first about two miles long and 600 feet high, the other only a high rock. It looked like Monte Christo's island, quite bare and desolate, till on turning a corner you could see a little house built against the side of the rock with a garden like a small pocket-handkerchief and a few goats. There were some little black men in boats fishing for coral. In the afternoon we were quite close to Africa and passed Bizerta, Carthage and Cape Bon. The night was too wonderful ; the moon nearly full with a great circle of light round it in the purple sky ; the light horizon, as light as at dawn, all round and the dark purple sea. I stayed up looking at it till past 11 o'clock ; there were no ripples except the one made by the ship ; the reflection of the moon in this was much more bright and quite different from any I have seen before. As I took a turn round the ship at about 11.15, I saw two red figures lazing in the moonlight half way down the ship, like two gnomes ; these were Bobby Tollet and Alan [Charteris],

lying on their stomachs finishing a game of chess, all the other lights having been put out. Malta is in sight. We are going to stop there and I am telegraphing to you to say there is one mild case of small-pox, a black sailor, who is going to be put on shore, in case the newspapers have a heading '*Small-pox on Manora*,' etc. I hope dear Chang is all right, give her and everybody my best love.—Your very loving,

GEORGE.

17

To his Mother

S.S. MANORA,

March 2nd, 1885, 11 a.m.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—We are opposite Burlos at the present moment, having passed Alexandria out of sight, and can see the land of Egypt for the first time, low sandy dunes on the horizon with groves of palms here and there. We can only see the tops of the palms even with glasses, so that they look like low lines of smoke with a gap of sky between them and the sand; every here and there the long three cornered sails of boats stick up apparently out of the ground as they are in the lagoon 'Lake of Burlos,' inside the boom of sand on the end of which is the lighthouse. I telegraphed to you from Malta to say that we had only one case of small-pox (one of the crew, a Dane) in case exaggerated accounts got into the paper, but I do not suppose that has happened, as M'Kinnon in the Grenadiers, on the staff there, promised to telegraph to London that we were all right. We put into the quarantine harbour, and sent our case on shore, got a clean bill of health,—'*Pratique*' they called it. (Blowed if he didn't call my hat '*Shappo*!') I was very pleased to see Malta, though we lost four hours. We got to Gozo the first island at 11 a.m. so that we saw it well, and Comino, the small uninhabited isle between it and Malta. As we steamed into the harbour at Valetta, soldiers standing about on the fortifications kept signalling to ask who we were, so we put Sergeant Lloyd, a signaller, on the

bridge, to answer and were cheered successively by all the little groups standing out against the blue sky on the sharp outlined points of the fortifications and barracks, piled one over the other, looking new and ugly, all of yellow stone. Some of the streets were quite narrow, only a few feet across, running up the hill which is very steep. Directly our quarantine flag was down, crowds of boats came up to the ship, to sell oranges and cigars; the men had a real blow out. And divers came in boats all yelling 'Eave Sir, he dive Sir,' and catching sixpences thrown into the sea, like cormorants after fish. They talk a mixture of French and Italian apparently. The 'Deccan' with the 53rd started from Malta whilst we were there, and the 'Queen' came in sight, coming up with the Engineers, but we soon got away from the latter, and passed the former by 10 miles the night after we left. We expect to reach Port Said at 5 or 6 p.m.; we shall coal and start down the canal to-morrow morning. I hope I shall find letters from you at Port Said, or at all events at Suez. It is very dull not knowing what is happening. We heard of poor Stewart's death at Malta, but they had only got the papers of 21st February. I should like to know how Papa likes Janet [a mare], and about the vote of censure, but I suppose that will be very ancient by the time you get this. You see I can have nothing to tell you at present as all is the same every day. We parade every day at ten. Jimmy Myers, our Surgeon Major, has given us one or two lectures on 'First aid to the Injured'; we walk round the deck, practise with 'Range-finders,' read little military books about engineering, outposts, etc., laugh at Wolseley's 'Soldiers' Pocket-book,' abuse the government, eat four square meals a day, smoke a great deal, and sleep ten hours at least out of the twenty-four. You will be glad to hear that I am in 'rude health' and have enjoyed this week in the Mediterranean very much. I suppose we shall begin to get hot to-night. The men are all very well; they thoroughly enjoy having rather more to eat and nothing to do. They sing comic songs every night with choruses, some capital ones. There is a real Paddy

'Donoghoo,' who is a genius with a face that makes you roar, he sings 'I'm Misther Dogherty' and dances jigs divinely. Saturday night we had a regular concert with the deck lit up. The first Mate sang a composition of his own with topical allusions to the Guards' 'Best regiment,' 'Manora beating the Deccan,' etc., which brought down the house, although very stupid. We had church here yesterday, all the men jammed into the fore-part, the Officers leaning over the rails of the Saloon deck. The men enjoyed roaring 'Onward Christian Soldiers' in different keys, led by one flute, very much. Give my very best love to everybody and ask Chang, Madeline and Pamela all to write, next address Suakim. I hope Chang is well and 'nevvv' too. Good-bye, darling Mamma.—Ever your loving,

GEORGE.

P.S.—I sent oranges from Malta to Belgrave Square: ought to be there when you get this.

18

To his Sister, Mary Elcho

S.S. MANORA,

4 p.m., *March 3rd*, 1885.

MY DEAREST 'CHANG,'—I hope you are all right by now. We have got on so fast that we missed the mail at Port Said this morning (if any of you have written there), so that I have heard nothing at present, and am afraid shall not till we get to Suakim at the end of the week; this was a great disappointment to me as I counted on finding letters at Port Said last night when we got there. We coaled there, a most extraordinary sight; I was officer of the watch and had to stay on deck all night. They brought great barges alongside the ship, six on each side, and Arabs carried the coals in baskets on their heads up planks and threw them into the hold through the hoppers. We were told this would take four hours; they came alongside at 6 o'clock and made great 'flambeaux' in iron cages, two on each barge, which lighted

up the whole harbour, then they all sat down in circles round them and smoked cigarettes till 9 o'clock, talking the whole time. Work then began, they all got on the plank close behind each other with loads on their heads, all shouting at the top of their voices ; the first man slipped down the hopper into the hold and the second sent down two big bits, which jammed up the hole. It was much funnier than any pantomime. I shouted down the hopper in a high voice answered by unearthly low notes from the depths, all the others who had begun to work, talking and shouting as if very keen, then turned round, quietly walked down the plank, put down their baskets, and began smoking round the fires as if nothing had happened : two only keeping up the conversation with the man in the hold till 12.30, when they got a pole and cleared the hole. We started again at 8 a.m. without having finished the coaling which was to have taken three hours. The whole ship was covered with coal dust. I went round the sentries at 1 o'clock, and nearly burst out laughing when the first sentry shouldered to me and repeated his orders in the moonlight with a face like Othello's. When the morning came I found I was as bad. I have made my face quite sore scrubbing it to get the dust out of my eye-brows and from under my eyes.

The sunset was wonderful last night, all colours without a single cloud in the sky. To-day is the first hot day we have had, 83° in the shade, it has never been more than 62° in the Mediterranean, so I feel rather limp. We form a procession down the Canal, the 'Deccan' being just behind with the 53rd and the 'Queen' in sight behind her with some Engineers. We have just received an ovation from a large P. & O. Steamer coming from Australia that we passed ; one old English lady, very fat, in a bright blue shawl, waving her handkerchief till purple in the face. We have been seeing strange birds on the banks, vultures and pelicans to wit, and passed the first caravan of Arabs with camels that I have seen about half-an-hour ago, all sitting down on the sand with the women all veiled, the little 'chimsies' ran to the bank and shouted

'biscuits, biscuits.' The mirage is extraordinary, you could swear that there were lakes with rocks in them on each side, the whole horizon flickers so that it looks just like a sea breaking on the sand. The last four days in the Mediterranean were heavenly, and lovely nights with a moon. We have just passed a French man-of-war in solemn silence, both staring at each other. They say they are bringing back wounded from China. We have to lie up for the night in the canal and hope to do so at Ismailia. Those who went on shore at Port Said last night visited the Casino, where the band played 'God save the Queen' and 'Rule Britannia' in their honour.

March 4th.

We did not get as far as Ismailia last night, but stopped in a narrow part. The sunset was wonderful again and the stars too. *N.B.*—I find that what the Arab children call out is not 'biscuits,' but 'baksheesh.' Three little dots ran for miles along the bank to-day for the coppers the men threw them. I am writing in the Orderly Room in the coolest part of the ship, but the glare outside is blinding, eating an ice between whiles. We got to Ismailia at 8 a.m., the 'Clan Drummond' was in front of us in the Canal, but we had a tremendous race across lake Timsah, a salt lake about ten miles long, this morning and just got in front. I shall be very glad when we get to Suakim to hear from all of you and know how you are, and to get off the ship; it is getting very dull on board, now it is so hot. Even the pastime of eating four big meals a day has departed probably not to return for some months, and it is impossible to run about in the sun. The men are going to have another concert to-night. If it were not for the beautiful nights a ship would be intolerable. I am going to send this from Suez this evening, we shall be able to go along in the Red Sea to-night. Give my best love to everybody and get quite well. Write and tell me how nevvv is, and about anything that you think will amuse poor 'ittle George, toasting in the sun. Good-bye, 'Chère Chan.'—Ever your loving brother, GEORGE.

19

To his Father

S.S. MANORA,

4.30 p.m., March 7th, 1885.

MY DEAR PAPA,—We shall arrive at Suakim to-morrow, Sunday morning. We are going slowly so as not to arrive before dawn as the reef 30 miles from Suakim is dangerous and the passage into the harbour intricate. I wrote to Chang a letter which I sent from Suez on the 4th. We arrived at Suez at 4.30 p.m.; the sight was very curious, background of those rocky hills, then the town, and on the spit of sand by the harbour a mass of 1000 camels with some asses and ponies all herded together; we were told that another thousand had been sent there in the three preceding days. They are very savage at this time of year and they have killed several Arabs. We were stopped by signal and found that all transports with battalions on them were to await orders at Suez. Edgar Vincent had come down from Cairo to see us, he told us that in Cairo the rumour was that we were to go to Afghanistan; however, we are getting incredulous of reports by now. We heard of Graham's illness. The 'Deccan' came in at sunset with the 53rd regiment. We cheered each other. In the evening we had a concert in the middle of which the 'Arab' and the 'Queen,' carrying Engineers and stores, started for Suakim. Our men cheered them as did those of the 'Deccan' and we burnt Roman Candles and played patriotic tunes. We fished next morning and shot at boxes in the harbour with revolvers. Lambton went on shore and we were all confined to the ship to await orders, keeping the fires going so as to start at once. We got our orders at 2 p.m., also letter from Fremantle telling us we were to go straight to the port at the end of the railway and encamp there, holding the 'Hasheen' redoubt only five miles from Osman Digna, so we shall have lots of practice in outpost duty. We started in half an hour with the wind behind

us and sails set, fife and drums played our 'march past'; it was very jolly going on fast again after all the delay at Port Said; in the Canal and at Suez the stars at night have been wonderful. Last night we saw the top of the Southern Cross; the sea sparkled everywhere with phosphorus and a light stayed in the West till 9 o'clock. Captain called it 'Zodiacal Sunlight'; I had never heard of it. In the Canal we passed H.M.S. 'Tarmar,' it was a curious meeting, as Digby's sailor brother who has been away in Australia four years was on it and passed within ten yards of him. He will also pass 'Everard' in the Grenadiers in the Canal, the only points in the whole voyage where they could have been near enough to see or talk to each other! All the men are very well; we shall only have five in hospital on landing, this is very little out of 850 people. I have learnt signalling whilst on board. Tell Mamma I am going to take *both* her case and roll of medicine to the front *strongly against* my wishes, most of the other things will remain at Suakim as I found that the whole of my kitbag contained nothing but medicine and groceries. I have presented the tea and coffee to the men and got rid of several pounds of soap to men in the Company who have lost theirs.

20

To his Father

March 10th, Monday,
SUAKIM.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I got your first letter last night! I liked getting it more than I can say and I cannot tell how glad I am you wrote it—this is the third day we have been here. We arrived on Sunday morning, the 8th, at 11 a.m. The Handoub hills are very high and rocky, you see them for 20 miles to sea. Suakim is on a perfectly flat plain of sand which runs away to the hills; to the left of the Handoub are two smaller hills between which are supposed to be 6000 or 7000 enemy. This is about

five miles from our camp which is nearest, being two and a half miles from the town. We can see the enemy's vedettes with glasses and their white camels with the naked eye. Sunday morning when we arrived the cavalry, artillery and mounted infantry were out chasing them and they had been shelled by the 'Dolphin.'

They sometimes come to within 600 yards. Osman Digna's strong position is at Tamai where they say he will have 15,000. He has sent to call on the English general to surrender as he intends to shoot half our soldiers and spear the rest. The night before we arrived, a horse was stolen and the groom speared in the head-quarter camp. The night after, three men in the 70th were speared and last night one in the Berkshires, so all the sentries are doubled now. We were marched up by an Egyptian band, it made us sweat a good deal. I saw Guy Dawnay in the evening and had a ride on his camel. Tell Mamma her tea was invaluable as it was all we got that night. I slept like a top, nobody else did as several shots were fired and we fell in our picquet twice. Yesterday I commanded a fatigue of 54 file and 3 Sergeants to draw tents for the Grenadiers; I paraded at 6.30 a.m. and went down on the train to No. 5 pier by the ordnance stores. I got four carts and had to load them at the stores, drag them by hand 150 yards through the sand to the train, unload, and then load the train; I sent off five train loads and did not get back till 3.30 p.m. I had half a cup of coffee before starting which I made as I dressed; some of the men had nothing. I worked myself and the sergeants too to get it done; we had nothing to eat till 2 o'clock, when I managed to buy two-penny-worth of bread apiece. It was a hard day's work. We do not get any water to wash and not much to drink, but *plenty* of soda water from the town. We had no alarms last night but I heard the Scots blow their picquet twice. None of our sentries are the least jumpy, and there is no danger at all if they keep awake. The Arabs that get in, wriggle in, only one or two of them; some even say it is the 'Friendlies' who stab the men.

There was a little hot muggy rain last night and the electric light from the 'Dolphin' which sweeps the country for about four miles made a rainbow. I am on picquet to-day, we visit the sentries every two hours between sunset and sunrise. They talk of a reconnaissance at the end of the week. When we were near the shore three hoopoes fluttered round the ship. On shore I have seen vultures, kites, small birds rather like larks, and little black and white birds the size of a bullfinch; several flights of wild geese have flown over. I am *perfectly* well in every way and do not even feel tired after yesterday's work. I am writing in my tent, driving off the flies after every three words with a whisk Alan got for me at Port Said. We have got very good tents, square, with a door on each side. We sleep with no blankets and all doors open and yet manage to sweat a good deal in the night. Write and tell me what you think about our complications with Russia. I hope to get more letters soon that have followed us but, nearly three miles from the town, it is hard to get anything until we have shaken down a little more. Give my best love to all. Good-bye.—Ever your most loving and devoted son,

GEORGE.

21

To his Sister, Madeline

SUAKIM,
March 10th, 1885.

MY DARLING MADELINE,—I write to you, as I expect you will get this about your birthday, to wish you many happy returns and good luck, but you must thank dear Pamela for her letter too. I got both your letters last night, I daresay I shall get more letters to-day which you may have written to Port Said or Suez. The camels here are very amusing, they carry all the loads about, and Egyptian soldiers in white uniforms and red fezes ride about on them; the natives are of all colours, some quite black, much blacker than niggers, with hair and

much better looking than niggers. They are Nubians I believe, they remind me of penwipers and ornaments for holding stamps and sealing wax, etc., etc. Others are brown. The friendly Arabs, of whom there are only 500, have great flocks of goats, which they take out every day just outside the camp; they dare not go very far for fear of the others. Guy Dawnay has got a very nice white camel on which I took a ride on Sunday. They are quite easy to ride when once you are on, but they get up so quickly that you have to be very quick in doing that. They get up in four pieces like this: [drawing]. When you want them to lie down again you say 'tcheek' in your throat and down they go plump on their knees, so that you nearly fall over their heads. There are lots of little lizards in the sand that come into one's tent. Monday morning, when I woke at 5.30, there was a little mouse sitting up looking at me. An enormous flock of geese is quacking away high up over my tent at this moment. One of the transport officers has got the tamest little monkey I ever saw, it rushes at his plate and eats out of it and then goes and sits on the edge of the bucket and drinks.

Best love to all.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

22

To his Mother

March 11th, 1885,

SUAKIM.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I have only time just to write a line as the post is going at 9.30 this morning. I wrote to Papa and Madeline yesterday, so they will go too. I was on picquet last night, I do not know if they expected anything but all the guards in the redoubts were strengthened, and my picquet of 100 men slept on the ground behind a shelter-trench we threw up yesterday on the west of our camp. We had a small scare at 2 a.m. coming down from the Scots Guards and fell in again. Harry

[Legge] came out in his pyjamas and drawn sword looking very funny. It was a *lovely* night, I was awake all night as I had to go round the camp five times; the sentries were posted at even hours, a patrol passed every hour, the Field officer came round at three. I could hear the patrols outside from one redoubt to the other, and we fell in at two and four o'clock, so I had a chance of watching all the stars rise and set till the moon rose at 3.30 and then the sun at 5.30. Have just gorged myself with sardines and marmalade as I was very hungry.

No time for more. I am very well and like it *very* much.
Good-bye.—Ever your most loving, GEORGE.

23

To his Mother

SUAKIM,

Saturday, March 14th, 8.15 a.m.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am enjoying myself here very much, have never felt so well in my life (guns in fort just begun to fire on enemy's scouts). I am sending this letter down to Suakim at 8.45 so it will be a short one. I was on picquet last night again, altogether there are now eight officers sleeping out every night, one major, two captains, five lieutenants. I slept like a top last night, with my water bottle for a pillow. I like being out at night best as we are not allowed to take off our clothes in any case. I feel rather full at the present moment having eaten two breakfasts already, one at a quarter to six when the picquet was dismissed and another at half past seven. I am afraid we shall not leave here for some time, as the transport is in chaos or rather does not exist at present. The mules we have got for our battalion won't do anything. Yesterday Rowley Winn, who does our transport, spent the whole day trying to get them to draw water, and finally had to borrow horses from the 49th. Our camp is something like this :— [drawing].

1. One company with its officers behind a low parapet, 'inlying picquet' where I slept last night.

2. Seventy men with two officers (a like contingent from Grenadiers and Scots prolong the line to the left), the whole 210 under a Field officer.

3. Another company with its officers form Quarter and Rear Guards of thirty men each.

The 3rd Grenadiers furnish five double sentries each on three sides, South, West and North ; the Scots Guards' camp joins us on the East and the Grenadiers beyond them. So you see we are pretty safe and in fact, have not been attacked yet ; the night before last some of them came up and Sergeant Humbersome, our comedian, got a shot at them from one of the redoubts. We sleep out from three to four nights out of the week. Last night was very quiet, only a few shots from the Sikhs but all the other nights there has been lots of firing. It *never* wakes me unless I am on duty. Good-bye, darling Mamma, give my best love to Papa and everybody.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

24

To his Father

Sunday, March 15th, 1885, 10 a.m.,

SUAKIM.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We have been here exactly one week to-day. I went into Suakim yesterday with Sebright and Winn : it was very interesting and did not smell *very* bad. The streets in the Arab quarter are very narrow, some of the houses are large and fine, or rather have been, built of white coral or limestone with carved woodwork shutters and doors, but they are very dirty now and empty, being used like barns with shops in the empty rooms, the Arabs all sitting about quite thick, and crowds of little children all very beautiful, and looking very intelligent ; they all laugh at you ; some of the men look very sulky. We found a transport camel left by its driver on the way back in a very bad way, so we took its pack off. We have got our camels now, 1300 for the Brigade and 30 mules for each battalion. It is hotter and

muggier to-day. We paraded at 3.40 a.m. and had Divine Service for the Brigade at 6. There have been little attacks every night; they come round and then creep up in gangs of twelve or twenty to weak spots; last night they were all round us, but never got between the redoubts 200 yards in front of the camp. We stood on the parapet and could see the flashes of the dropping fire our men kept up. The West Fort threw a lime-light along the front of the redoubts. The Arabs fired back from about 40 yards but hit no one, some bullets went over the camp. I went to bed at eleven and slept sound all night. The firing went on till 5 o'clock; the pick-up this morning was 'nil' but I hope we shot some—they always drag them away! One deaf Sergeant said he heard a squeal when he fired; in another Redoubt the Sergeant said, 'I ordered *myself* and two privates to fire a volley and saw two blacks drop on the floor'!! General Graham sent to compliment us this morning on our steadiness, saying that we had kept the Arabs from getting past the redoubts, for which we were placed there, and that he could hear the fire was completely under control and consisted of picked shots all night. This was quite true. Some of the other regiments turned out on former occasions in force and blazed away into the darkness waking everybody up. The men were all very cheerful, and astonish all by the way they dig and work, etc., etc. We seem to do everything, we had $4\frac{1}{2}$ companies (400) out all last night and have got to furnish a fatigue of 250 men at two o'clock this (Sunday) afternoon to dig at the H. redoubt. I very much doubt if we shall attempt much till we get a moon which will not be for a week.

Drummond-Hay killed a scorpion in our tent yesterday and I found a three-inch centipede in my big tobacco pouch. So we had a 'chasse' this morning assisted by Juden, and found a big scorpion under the end of my bed, two centipedes and a whole nest of 30 sand-hoppers in the corner by the pillow, also another scorpion and centipede under Hay's. There are swarms of big black

ants, but we leave them in the hope that they will eat the white ones, to guard against which I have balanced my bag on glass bottles. They ate quite half of one of our men's serge jumpers the night before last which he had used as a pillow, there are trails in the sand in the tent every morning curling about, made by the lizards. There are far more birds and animals than I expected in a desert.

The 'Friendlies,' two of whom were placed in each redoubt the other night to hear the enemy which they are supposed to do better than Europeans, caught a civit cat something like a pole-cat only not so long in the body and stouter, with a badger-pie skin. They brought it into the camp by a string round its tail and then speared it on the ground. It stunk the whole place out. The Scots Guards killed a lizard one yard long and—Heaven knows how—have caught a live heron which they keep, poor thing, in a bell tent and feed on meat from their rations.

Thresher & Glenney either sent me no shirts (only four sleeping jackets having turned up) or else they were not packed up. Will you look in the bill and see if they are charged; I ordered the red cashmere ones and should like them. Will you tell Benson & Hedges to send a pound and a half of 'Prince of Wales smoking mixture.'

We had a 'stowaway' on the 'Manora,' an American cowboy from Texas, he calls himself Carlo Montague, and has set up in a store at Suakim. He is a good-looking fellow, says he came over from America on purpose to go to the front here which he means to do, and that he helped to take 'Sitting Bull.' I hope we shall have 'reconnaissance' or something soon as the night attacks are very tame; let me know if they report any in the papers. I shall have to send this before the Mail arrives here. Best love to all; tell Pamela I am glad to hear Gillie [a dog] is fat. Good-bye.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

25

*To his Father**Tuesday, March 17th, 1885, 1 a.m.,*

SUAKIM.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I got your fourth letter and two from the dear children, who have been very good in writing so often, to-day, dated *March 1st*, but I got your enclosure of newspaper cuttings and the children's letters of *March 5th* the day before yesterday, *March 15th*, so they only took ten days coming. Perhaps your letter of the 1st came by the Italian post and not by Brindisi? Send my best love to darling 'Chang.' I do hope she is all right now. Getting a letter from Madeline to-day saying Chang was not so well, after hearing on Sunday that she had been lanced once and was better, frightened me, till I looked at the dates: I have got all your letters.

The camels here are very amusing animals, they take a resigned but very gloomy view of life, growling and grumbling whenever they lie down or get up, and expositulating while they are being loaded. We were aroused the other morning by a tremendous outcry from Hay's Irish servant, Biggin, 'By Jabers! it's a shsnake!' but it was only a small lizard. This morning however Hay killed a real one with his sword, kneeling on the bed as he had nothing on. I killed one too this morning while cutting Mimosa for the zeriba, about 18 inches long. There is only one poisonous snake 'the assal' in this country, but as I don't know him by sight I think it is as well to be on the safe side.

We are all very angry here as they have actually made us move the whole camp back from where we were on the high ground, with good water handy, to the bottom of a hole with no water, the only reason for this is the nervousness of the Q.M.G. and Staff in general who are mortally afraid of the Arabs at night; this is perfectly ridiculous as there is no chance of their attacking in

force, and no amount of fussing will prevent one or two getting in now and then. They actually make our men sleep outside the tents with their arms and accoutrements on, after working them for ten hours a day in the sun.

We have a Greek cook who is most amusing with the English soldier servants. 'Rice! Rice! Rice!! You know! Yes, Yes, Oui, Oui.' He is very hard to understand as he begins everything he has to tell you in bad French and works through Italian into fluent Greek. He is very proud of his powers as a linguist and says he will soon know English. I trust not, as another language added to his repertoire would make him quite incomprehensible. Alan's horse has arrived, it pulls rather with him, so that he scours the desert in front of his general when they visit the outposts. He is very well and so am I.

John Gladstone has been made an extra A.D.C. to Fremantle, this only leaves seventeen company officers when you deduct those in Mounted Infantry, etc. Fremantle came up when I was digging at a redoubt the other day, he mentioned that he had gone out with you to Turkey.

The sunsets here are quite extraordinary behind the high rocky hills, exactly like Chang's valentines. I do not expect we shall start till next week as no tanks to carry water have arrived, and I am afraid that the reconnaissance, if there is one, will be made by the cavalry and artillery alone.

In my letter to Mamma I maligned Thresher & Glenney as I have found my shirts. I have written all I can about this place during these last few days so as to let you know about it before it all becomes a matter of course to me; I now feel there is nothing more to tell before we advance, unless something unexpected turns up. I suppose I shall hear about the gallops from Wilbury in your next letter, and that you will have got my letter from Malta. Mamma's 'Shakespear' is most useful. This is the hottest day we have had, the sweat poured off me to-day when we were working. I am still fatter

than when I left England owing to the voyage, and feel fit and clean and enjoy myself very much. I do not mind the heat half so much as I expected ; I live entirely on soup with vegetables in it, macaroni, rice, bread and marmalade with lots of coffee and cocoa ; have not eaten meat ' pure et simple ' for three days. I hope you like Janet [a horse]. Give my very best love to all. Good-bye, dearest Papa.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

26

To his Mother

SUAKIM,

2 p.m., *March 21st*, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I have sent off a telegram to ' Wyndham, Belgrave Square ' which I hope will find some of you, because you wanted me to do so whenever we have a little fight, I think it rather extravagant except for a proper battle (2/6 a word) but it does make us feel nearer thinking of the same thing at the same time. I am ' Um berufen ' (I don't know how to spell that) extraordinarily well and fit. Up at five the day before yesterday and out in the sun till 7 o'clock, then picquet officer's duty all the afternoon, up all night going round the camp, which is over 900 yards in our new position, *five times* between 7.30 and 3.30 ; breakfast yesterday at 4.30, a march of eight miles, little battle, and back at 6.30 is a good deal on the stretch, but I feel quite fresh to-day. I am up again to-night and I believe we go out again to-morrow either to Handoub, as I think, or in the direction of Tamaia. All our faces were completely enamelled with crusted sand and sweat when we got back last night, and cracked and sore from being out from 5.15 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. without any shade all day. I larded myself with vaseline however, and am quite comfortable to-day. None of the men in my company were hit. The march out was delightful, falling in in the dark and seeing the other columns winding out of

the camp ; the first hour and a half to 7.30 was quite cool and pleasant yesterday with a nice breeze. I am taking it real easy to-day so as to be fresh for to-morrow, having only been out of my tent twice, once for breakfast, once for lunch. I have not much more time to write ; I am writing to Papa about what we did in a military way yesterday ; this is only a scrawl to say I love you, and to give my love to you all.—Ever your very loving son,

GEORGE.

27

To his Father

SUAKIM,

Saturday, March 21st, 1885, 2.30 p.m.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—On Sunday the whole force paraded at 7 a.m. by the W. Redoubt and was inspected by Graham ; afterwards the cavalry and artillery and mounted infantry went forward to the valley towards Hasheen ; the enemy would not come on at all (they say it was a feast day). We took four prisoners ; one man was killed and one officer wounded by a spear in the face. I was on picquet Thursday night and came off at four o'clock. Yesterday morning we were ordered to parade at 5.15 to be up by the W. Redoubt by 6 o'clock. I ate an enormous breakfast of tinned Australian beef and pickles at 4.30. The east was only just grey when we fell in. All the troops in their places by 6.15 ; the cavalry and mounted infantry went on and formed a screen ; when we were fairly under way we advanced towards Hasheen in the following order :—1 battalion on the right—Guards Brigade in mass of column—2nd Brigade in line—Indian Brigade in mass of column, Gardner battery on left. The hollow in the middle filled with mules carrying ammunition, ambulance, water rations, and a great number more camels carrying the materials for making a strong redoubt on one of the hills, in which we were to place two guns to command the wells and leave two battalions. We halted at 8 o'clock, nearly alongside

the hill we meant to occupy, and could see some of the enemy lining the crests of the hills further up the valley ; they fired a few shots at the cavalry and mounted infantry who made the ground good on our flanks for some way in front. It was a lovely morning, the first five miles were fairly open, but all the ground from where we halted up the valley is a thick bush of clumps of impenetrable thorns ; the valley is commanded by the hills on each side, so that it would be a difficult defile to advance along if held by good troops. We (Coldstream) closed to quarter column and deployed to the left and advanced in line as best we might, but soon had to advance by fours from right of companies, the Sikhs were in front of us, the 70th and others of the 2nd Brigade with 17th Company R.E. stopped behind to make the entrenchments. We halted and formed a square of the Brigade with all the mules, ambulance, camels carrying water, etc., inside. Coldstream front face, Grenadiers rear, Scots Guards two sides ; we could now see the Berkshire and Marines swarming up the precipitous hill on the left from which the enemy were firing, fix their bayonets, get their wind, and then reach the crest. The enemy bolted and our men fired volleys at them, meanwhile the cavalry and Bengal Lancers in front had got regularly mixed up with the enemy in the bush and were rather knocked about, they speared a good many Arabs, but it was impossible for cavalry to work. Croppy Ewart's horse was shot under him. The enemy then almost ceased fire and were shelled by the artillery and they retired. The Bengal Lancers and mounted infantry came into our square to dismount, the former are splendid fellows. I saw one with his spear dripping with blood sitting up looking as proud as Lucifer and very pleased with himself although the back of his right hand was cut open to the knuckles. They lost a good many horses and some men. We sat down and rested for a time : only one casualty, Surgeon Lane, had occurred in our square. We smoked cigarettes. One bullet fell quite close. At 12.30 or so the cavalry and mounted infantry

left the square and I believe were to cover our retreat. We began retiring at 1 o'clock through the bush, the mules and camels kept stopping and throwing out the rear face in which I was. As it turned out *no one* covered the retirement and in five minutes time all the Arabs were back on the hills to our left (as we retired) blazing away at our square; in another minute they were down in the bush alongside. At this juncture the cavalry came through the left rear corner of the square and the mounted infantry most *improperly* came too, having, I believe, been told to stay and hold the enemy in check. The two coming together completely rolled up the rear face for some minutes, my company, No. 6, were practically ridden over, and 5, 4 and 3 were all pushed together; the bullets began to come pretty sharp and a good many were hit at the same time, (being under fire is very much like not being under fire and the 'Whit-ping Whit-ping' of the bullets and little puffs of dust sound and look very harmless). The mules and camels kept stopping and getting caught in the thorns and the delays in picking up the few men who were hit, and then changing them from stretchers into doolis (can't spell it) helped the confusion and discomfort. However our men were very steady, the square halted every now and then and blazed at the enemy, but they never gave us time to get quite right. When we were back, level with the redoubt, the Engineers and 70th had made, we halted and the men had their rations whilst the artillery opened on the Arabs. Greaves, Chief-of-Staff, said we were the best soldiers he had seen as the men were so steady under trying circumstances. We lost ten men wounded—seven severe, three slight.—One of them,—Wray in No. 1, shot through the kidneys—died last night. Poor Dalison in the Scots was shot through the heart; it is very sad as he made a poor marriage and has lots of children. The Scots lost also two men killed and four wounded, the Grenadiers three wounded; Stirling our senior major who at Tel-el-Kebir, the last time he was in action, had a bullet through the case of his glasses into the butt of his pistol, which knocked him

down, yesterday had one against his stirrup iron which glanced through the arm of his mare's near fore leg. Bass's horse that Rowley Winn (who commands our battalion transport) was riding was also shot above the off hind fetlock. We marched back and got in at 6.30. All the men were quite fit to-day; I have never been better in my life; I like campaigning quite as much as I expected, which is saying a good deal. I slept like a log last night; we have no water in the camp to-day. I do not understand how they mean to march us through this country when they can't supply us with water sitting still. Post just going, good-bye, dearest Papa.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

28

To his Mother

*Thursday, March 26th, 1885,
1ST ZERIBA, SUAKIM.*

MY DARLING DARLING MAMMA,—I got your letter to-day and was so glad to hear your news in it, and of dear Chang's recovery. You would laugh if you saw me now! I have not washed or changed a scrap since Sunday night. We have got absolutely *nothing* here. I will write down as much news as I can and will write more connectedly when I have a breathing time to remember what has happened the last few days.

Sunday 22nd we (Coldstream) escorted a convoy to the position at Hasheen that we took and garrisoned on Friday. We saw the enemy on the way back and formed square, etc., but were not attacked. Our men at Hasheen had seen a great fight going on to the south. When we returned we heard that the Berkshires, Marines, Naval Brigades and Bengal foot and Sikhs, who had been sent to make the first zeriba on the way to 'Tamaai,' had been attacked and repulsed enemy. One o'clock Sunday night (the whole battalion slept out) we were ordered to march at five in morning, which we did with nothing

with us. It was a hard march through the bush with all the remainder of the troops. When we got near the zeriba I had the first taste of what are called the horrors of war and these are nasty ; the whole country round is strewn and reeks of dead camels and bodies ; my stomach heaved a good deal but now we are perfectly hardened to any stench. The facts were these :—Our men got there at 12 o'clock and began making a zeriba in 'T' shape of three squares. All the camels of the convoy were out unloaded ; most of the men's arms were piled and lots of working parties were out clearing the bush. The vedettes were too close in ; when suddenly the Arabs came in a rush, the vedettes came in with them. All the hundreds of our camels were driven on by the Arabs who hamstrung them as they went ; the Sikhs and Marines stood in two rallying squares but the camels and Arabs swept away the zeriba and the Bengal Infantry, turning over horses and carts and stabbing everything, carrying some away 600 yards with them. Our men tried to stand in knots, shouting 'Stand ! Stand ! well then Englishmen stand.' Our rallying square of knots of Engineers, Marines, Berkshires and transport got together, led by the Roman Catholic priest (Collins), revolver in hand ; another square, the Naval Brigade, stood and lost heavily ; there were over 100 dead Arabs in this square and 240 round it. On Tuesday the Marines and ourselves marched out to meet a convoy. We were shot at all the way and attacked on the way back with our square full of camels. I commanded the right half of No. 6 on the right side of the square, on which the Arabs charged. I stood behind two front rank men kneeling who had no rear rank men and got a splendid view. They came straight at my half company, only one reached the bayonets, about fifteen got to within seven yards. I have got the shield of the leader of the charge who rolled over in front of me just as I was going to use my revolver. I think of you all a *great deal* and am sure I feel quite plainly that you are thinking of me. I do not feel at all far away or separated from you in any way and have long talks with you in

imagination. Good-bye, darling Mamma, give my best love to Papa and all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—Poor old Alan [Charteris] distinguished himself on Sunday. A Sergeant of the Bengal Lancers who fought beside him said he was a 'Bara something Sahib,' which meant the 'Devil of a fellow.' He shot one man and killed the man with his sword who speared him, after he had driven his spear through his wrist. I missed seeing him, *worse* luck! but heard he was in good spirits, etc. Jock Dalrymple looked fairly well too before he started back. Best love to *All*.

29

To his Father

SUAKIM,
March 31st, 1885.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We got back here on Saturday night, having been in the zeriba since the Monday before. When I got back I found two telegrams from Hugo [Elcho] asking about Alan, so I telegraphed to him. Alan will probably be quite well in a week or ten days; the bone of his wrist was broken and the artery cut, but he has done very well and is quite comfortable and happy. I missed seeing him on the Monday we got to the zeriba which was a great disappointment, and I have not been able to go to the 'Ganges' as I was rather tired when I got back here and have been resting and am all right now. We were to have started on Monday for Tamaia, then to-morrow Wednesday, and now I believe it is postponed again. All sorts of reports are about, e.g. that Osman has retired, that his men are deserting, etc. It will be very disappointing if he does not stand at Tamaia as I do not see what on earth we are to do. I have got six letters from you, the mail should have arrived here yesterday but has got left at Suez I believe; the flannel trousers have arrived and are very acceptable. No words can describe what the stink in the zeriba was like.

I believe they counted 1400 bodies round and 400 camels besides mules and horses. The first night after we got there one rank stood up whilst the other lay down *all night*. The enemy fired at us and shot one man (Lee) through his thigh. We had a scare another night, the Berkshires suddenly beginning to fire in the middle of the night. It was impossible to eat much of the biscuits and salt beef, and the water was beastly. One day we had nothing but water brought up in putrid goat-skins, we made it into tea and coffee but it was horrible. Every day we had to cut the bush or escort the empty camel convoys half way back to Suakim, so we had a hard six days. We started quite unprepared and had no camp-kettles and most of us (self) had no great coats. It got too cold to sleep after 2.30 a.m. so we generally walked up and down from then till sunrise. The bath I had on Saturday night was the greatest pleasure I have ever had, it was like bathing in gold, as we would have paid anything for the water to drink the day before. I got Mamma's letter of the 13th in the zeriba but only got that of the 8th to-day; all her friends are well. We (Coldstream) have lost altogether—Alan wounded, two men killed, and eighteen wounded. The best fun we have had was the fight we had last Tuesday to ourselves, and 400 Marines. We went out to meet a convoy, each in square. The Arabs followed alongside and shot at us, only hitting one Marine officer. When we reached the convoy we formed one long oblong, with the camels in the centre. As we were in battalion square formation I had command of the right half company of No. 6 and my captain Digby was the other side of the square with the camels between us, so when the Arabs charged I had all the fun to myself. Most of my proper company were left on guard at Suakim, so No. 6 was made up largely of our mounted infantry who have not been mounted. We lost no men in the charge as only one Arab reached the square, he fell on the bayonets of my half company and I have his shield. Two men in my half company, Beecroft and Gribble, were hit and the left hand man (Corporal Bowens) of the next was shot in

the head. A tank of water close behind me was struck—Winn's horse was grazed again! Dalrymple was out with us as Brigade Major, the bullet went through his shoulder smashing the blade: two Marine officers were hit, and another had a hit on his sword, one of the sword bayonets of my men was twisted up by a bullet. On Thursday 26th we went out to meet a convoy escorted by all the troops left, we saw it attacked in the distance; some of the bullets fell by our square. We were shot at every night in the zeriba but they never hit anyone after the first night.

We have heard of Roberts going to the Bolan Pass, I should like to give up this job and go on there, but I do not think Russia will fight if we really show our teeth. I am so sorry poor Chang had such a bad time but I suppose she will be well and flourishing by the time you get this. We were all very anxious about Willie Grenfell on Saturday week, as he was missing. He had a near squeak of it, as he lost his horse and had to run to Suakim. There is *no doubt* as to this being a very real fanatical movement; the Arabs have white banners one of which was captured on Sunday with 'There is one God, Mohammed is his Prophet, death to all Infidels' embroidered on it in scarlet. Guy Dawnay says our enemies are Hadendowas, not Rubennes or from Kordofan, and it shows how great the influence of the Mahdi is, that they have shaved off their heads of hair and wear his uniform, white with diamond patches. These are the only ones who *really* charge, the others hang back and wait for openings. It is sickening to think that we have killed women every time but, if they charge with the others, it cannot be helped. One night the Berkshires fired a volley at some figures in the bush and six women were found there in the morning. Little boys charged too on Sunday, one of twelve years got inside the zeriba.

I suppose we have been quite forgotten by all but our relations amidst all the excitement about Russia and news from Suakim figures in the bottom corner. I am glad you like Janet, I daresay she will sell well at Tattersall's

if duly puffed by Timmie. I suppose she is too big for Madeline but her manners could not be more perfect than they are. Give my best love to Mamma, Chang, Pamela and Madeline, to whom I wish very many happy returns of the day.—Ever your very loving son,

GEORGE.

30

To his Mother

*Sunday, April 5th, 1885,
SUAKIM.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—You will have seen by the papers that the great battle of Tamaai ‘as was to be’ ended in a fizzle after all our labour and the sweat of our brows expended in strengthening MacNeil’s zeriba and conveying water up to it. It was hard work marching there, we had ‘reveille’ at 11.30, fell in at 2.15 a.m. on Thursday morning and the whole force marched off with a large convoy of camels from the water fort soon after 4 o’clock. We got to the zeriba at 8.30 and breakfasted and lunched combined off one hard-boiled egg and some biscuit. Our friends, the dead camels, had become more rampagious than ever; we halted right in the middle of them and a few stray bodies or rather bags of bones that had escaped the eye of the burial parties. You often hear of a smell making people sick, I saw it *actually* do so on this occasion to several of the men. We started off again at 10 o’clock. There was a good deal of wind and the balloon, we have all heard so much about, burst. We marched all day, it was fortunately not very hot. The cavalry and mounted infantry went forward two miles and seized the knoll of rocky black basalt, on which we rather hoped to find the enemy. A few of them were in sight but retired when fired at. We got there at five-thirty (16 hours under arms) and found plenty of traces of the Arabs (goat skins, feathers, etc.) and still more of their camels, which latter made it rather unpleasant as a resting place. We were crowded together to an extraordinary extent, my

company slept in a space of about 8 ft. wide between two rows of picketed horses. The enemy fired at us as usual at night and hit one or two. One man was also shot dead by accident. They stopped when we fired one of our guns at them. Reveille at 5 a.m. on Friday morning. Had some cocoa and biscuits and advanced at about 7 o'clock. Our Brigade to whom the Australians are attached formed the left rear and rear face of the enormous square in which we moved. We left the 'menagerie' behind I am thankful to say and only took the ambulance and spare ammunition mules. It was a lovely morning, not very hot, the country perfectly bare, a succession of rocky ridges, with one deep khor with a sandy bottom. It would have been very pretty if the Arabs had held these ridges and we had carried them one by one, but they did not, cause why! they had all brushed off bag and baggage with the camels and herds and all, leaving only a small force with rifles on the other side of the khor; these made rather good practice at our rear face of the square (because they were shooting at the front face and mounted infantry 600 yards in front) and the bullets came pretty thick. Lambrook in my company was shot through the arm and Sergeant Butler in the next company, some Grenadiers, Scots and Australians were also hit. One bullet struck between the legs of the man I was walking beside; Mildmay (Grenadiers) was hit in the chest by a spent ricochet but not hurt. We found the huts, threshing floors, goat pens, etc., of what must have been a very great number of Arabs. We found no water so we retired, burning the huts and ammunition in them, and got back about 12 o'clock. Biscuits and water and started back soon after 1 p.m., got to zeriba 6 o'clock (13 hours under arms). Here confusion reigned supreme. We were all wedged together among the camels but managed to get a meal of soup and rice, which I hardly expected. I dined, smoked and slept (I didn't sleep much as my legs ached) without getting up from the ground on which I had sat down. My slumber was troubled by a thorn bush which I dis-

covered under my behind when the dawn came. Started about 8 o'clock on Saturday morning and marched to Suakim and pitched two tents per company on our first ground of all by the west fort, where we arrived about 2 p.m. I hoped for a night in bed but no such luck! as it was my turn for picquet and I had to go round once every two hours. To-day, Easter Sunday, left half battalion paraded at 6 a.m. for bathing. I marched my company down and bathed myself; it was delicious and I feel a little cleaner in consequence. We strike our one day's camp in an hour's time and start off at dawn to-morrow in the direction of Handoub to make a zeriba half way. I believe we are going to make a permanent camp at Handoub (eleven miles off) to protect the railway. I daresay you will know all I have written from the papers but no matter. Yesterday we marched back rather to the right of our usual track, so we passed over the bush in which the Arabs were before they charged us on Tuesday (March 24th). I was surprised at the number of graves, skulls, hands and toes sticking up everywhere. We seem to have killed a good many more that day than we thought at first, and *our* fight is thought a good deal of.

The whole country is covered with gorged vultures and white eagles. It is difficult to judge of the size of objects in this climate, so that they look like countless cocks and hens in a vast poultry yard. I cannot help thinking of poor Crack [a dog] and how she would have enjoyed putting them up. The flies are becoming intolerable; I tried to sleep to-day with my head in a silk handkerchief and my hands in a gauze veil but in vain. I am *very well* again and enjoying life. I am sure you are all thinking of me to-day (Easter) and I am thinking of you. Best love to all. Good-bye.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Juden [his servant] very well.

31

To his Father

HANDOUB,

Sunday, April 12th, 1885.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—It is certainly getting hotter here, but the most trying thing is the great variation of temperature between the night and the day, e.g. yesterday the thermometer was 122° Farh. in the sun, about 96° in the tents; the night before the minimum, which is reached about 4 a.m., was 50° a difference of 72 degrees! The night before that it went down to 47°. In consequence of this there are tremendously heavy dews. We all sleep out with the companies in case of attack, and get wet through the blanket, which is drenched every night. It is this cold which upsets everyone's stomach more or less; people in England forget when they say, 'After all it's only 96 degrees in the shade' that we never are in the shade but always cutting bushes or escorting convoys for hour after hour in the blazing sun. It is also all nonsense about getting 'used' or 'acclimatised' to heat. Heat gradually wears everyone down, and the people who stand it best are those fresh from England. When we march we have as a rule four or five sunstrokes. The Marines who have been here nine months or more had thirty the other day in three hours, none of the cases are severe, the men generally return to duty in three or four days. We have had all the papers about our fights. Most of the accounts are ridiculous. Although the business of Sunday, the 22nd, was mismanaged still it is a great mistake to have spoken of it as 'nearly a disaster' as it was in reality a complete defeat of the Arabs, whose losses were fearful, a native spy saying that besides their dead their wounded were 'like the sand of the sea.' The accounts of the dead bodies, camels, lost stores, etc., are not at all exaggerated, the whole line from Suakim to MacNeil's zeriba was strewn with stores and the air laden with stench. On Monday last we marched five miles in

this direction and made a zeriba called 'No. I. Station' and stayed there till Wednesday when we advanced and made this zeriba. Monday night was the last night we saw anything of the enemy—they have entirely disappeared. That night I was dreaming comfortably that I was seeing everybody I knew and talking about the past war, when 'bang-fist' 'bang-fist'; I jumped up in time to see the Arab flashes pointed at us from quite close. They shot very straight as they knocked over the platform on which was the signal lamp at which they were firing. They retired directly we fired two volleys of one section at them. This is much the best place we have been in up to now. Our zeriba is at the foot of a hill on a little plain surrounded by rocky hills, the scenery not unlike Crummach and Buttermere—but alas! the *lakes* are represented by flat rock and sand with bush growing on it. We get brackish water, however, here by digging, which enables us to wash and does for the animals, consequently the convoys are smaller. There are lots of sand grouse here. Shute, Gladstone and Winn have shot a good many coming to the wells, the latter also shot an antelope and skinned him last night. We think of nothing but the Russian news out here and know nothing of our destiny from day to day—some of the married ones are I think getting home-sick now there is no excitement to keep us going, as none of us think there will be more fighting. One of our Indians taken prisoner at Hasheen escaped from the Arabs and arrived here yesterday, he says they are in great straits with no food, eating their camels; that there were 2000 of them only at Tamaai, of whom our shells killed 300. They are trying hard to get the Amarers to come in but I suppose it is on the cards that we may have to clear out of this to fight Russia, in which case it would be very cruel to induce them to join us now. These Amarers have been present at the fights *but do nothing*; if we had been defeated no doubt they would have come on. We have cut a drift 100 yards wide from here to Suakim, ten miles; this in itself completely damns all the former operations as it shows

how easily it could be done. I consider our losses on Sunday 22nd to be more the fault of Graham than MacNeil. There can be no doubt that a drift should have been cleared through the thick parts at any rate of the bush to facilitate the convoy, also that a force should have been sent *first* to make the zeriba, and the convoy sent six hours after. With regard to newspaper criticisms they were quite right to halt in the *thick* bush as otherwise it is impossible to make a *strong* zeriba *quickly*. Many little mistakes go to make a big one, there is no doubt that the cavalry vedettes were too close in, for this they are responsible, not the General. It is said that the covering party of the Berkshires had been withdrawn contrary to orders. What no one seems to see is that you cannot fight without heavy losses if a good enemy attacks you in force. Even if no mistakes had been made and everyone had known ten minutes before that the enemy were in force, *they must have gone on making the zeriba on which all their lives* and transport depended and must have trusted to getting to their arms or unslinging them, forming, rallying on company squares and retiring as much as possible on the salients of the zeriba so as not to mask the faces. Now if this had been done so well that none of the enemy got into the zeriba our losses must still have been very heavy. The great fault was the presence of the camels *in front* of the line of defence; this is known to be wrong, but critics do not know the difficulty of dealing with 1000 camels. This is why I say the *fault* was in their being present at all whilst the zeriba was being made. It would only have taken three battalions three or four days (two working one covering) to have cut a drift to the spot. If this had been done one force could have made the zeriba, and a much smaller one escorted the convoy along the drift in safety. I think the whole of the expedition to Tamaai was nonsense from first to last, undertaken merely to give the papers something to write about until the railway began,—Graham trusting to the Arabs being fools enough to attack his square in the open at Tamaai as they did last year. We

ought to have begun from the first doing what we are doing now, steadily clearing a drift for the railway by Handoub and on to Tambout, and forming stations and depots with a blockhouse every four or five miles. There would have been a strategic objective in this, and we should have had our fight all right under favourable circumstances as Osman was pledged to stop the railway, and having collected his army must have attacked to keep his half-starved followers together. A back way from Tamaai, behind the hills of Hasheen, debouches at Handoub; he would no doubt have availed himself of this and we should have fought on this plain which we command from the two little low Handoub hills. Having however done as he did, the only thing was to push on *at once* after Sunday's fight. After all a *general* ought to be able to invent some expedient and need not think it necessary to go hammering away with his convoy in square. The enemy were completely defeated—all their herds, camels, women, etc., were at Tamaai. I should have used the water-carts and mules of the *whole* force if necessary to send to them one brigade or even two battalions, some artillery and mounted infantry straight off on *Sunday night* from Suakim. It would have looked risky but been quite safe, they would have arrived on the Monday evening (instead of Tuesday week as we did) and caught the defeated army with all its wounded, half of them not having had time to water. All the herds and women were there so they must have fought and the war would be over. There are all sorts of rumours about the Turks coming, I think it would be a very good thing. Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

32

To his Mother

HANDUB,

Saturday, April 18th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Here I am still at Handub, the right half battalion having marched to Otao this morning :

we go on Monday. (You see I spell the names of places differently every time like a newspaper correspondent), as a matter of fact 'Handoub' 'Hasheen' and 'Tamaai' are *not places* at all but districts or rather directions from Suakim.

I had been a little seedy after MacNeil's zeriba and afterwards, but am now in robust and rude health, *as well as in England*. It is a great thing 'coming again' like this when some of the others are getting rather knocked up. Manley has gone home, Sutton to Suez to recruit, and Frederick to H.M.S. 'Ganges' for a few days, and Milligan to a redoubt at the base. Am enjoying myself *very* much and at peace with all the world (now the enemy have disappeared), except the correspondents. I should like to have their blood for having tortured you so about the advance. There was an extensive reconnaissance to-day and not one of the enemy could be found. The countless number of different animals in a camp of this sort make it very amusing; Pamela would like to come here for a day to 'pal' with all the camels, horses, mules, donkeys, goats and dogs that eat and sleep beside us and afford the best society out here. One big mule, whom you will be surprised to hear has been christened 'Tommy' by me, is a great favourite. Picketed a yard from the door of the mess tent, he gets lots of bread to eat. All the mules but one are quite tame and like being petted and talked to. We took 600 goats from the enemy the other day, some of the men have bought them, or we have presented two or three to each company. They are *quite tiny*; the men milk them all day long (they give about two table-spoonfuls). They were led in twos and threes by each drummer when the half battalion marched this morning. I feel as if I was in a travelling circus when there's not much business doing. Bobby Follet, Sam Hall, Harry Legge, Winn, and Shute, my 'boon companions,' have gone on to Otao, so it is rather dull here as none but the silent and the grumblers remain. MacNeil's brigade have come up close here. He is very nice and doesn't care a rap for the newspapers. I saw

old Wilty¹ who looks very well, MacNeil says he is the best A.D.C. he has ever had. MacNeil thinks 'Brigade' will go home and not summer here. I hope you will not mind but I have volunteered for a 'Camel Corps' they are forming here, so *if chosen*, I should probably stay out in any case. It will be rather a wrench to see the others go off, if they do, but I have no doubt that I ought to stick to my volunteering out here all the more as it is rather hotter here than in London. I was rather tempted not to, on the chance of Sutton's place in the M.I. if he is invalided. This will not be welcome news to you, but 'cheer up,' I am afraid there is very little chance of my getting it, as we are very short of Lieutenants, whereas the Grenadiers have all theirs and only one Captain and one Sub. are wanted from the Brigade. Wilty says he has often been much more frightened out with the 'drag' than in the hand to hand fighting on Sunday 22nd March. The water here is unnecessarily nasty as the barrels in which it is being carried are not clean. Thousands of gallons carried here eleven miles by camels are *useless* except for washing, as the enormous tanks in which it has been stored have been previously used for oil!!

Juden is very well, he has been an *excellent* servant to me, and a capital soldier under fire. My hair is now clipped close to the skin, which is a great comfort as no sand can keep there, and my face is further adorned by a straggling 'Newgate fringe' of really *black* hair which settles the right of my wig to be called brown once and for all. The fashionable barber out here is Cassidy, the servant of our Surgeon Alexander, he rests his claims on his father having been a horse clipper. Next to the animals the natives of different climes who are with us give most pleasure out here. I do not care much for the Greeks, Maltese and Cypriotes who fill the offices of cooks and look after the mules, but the Indian followers and friendly Arabs are charming, especially the latter. I can quite understand Wilfrid² being so fond of them, they

¹ Lord Wiltshire, afterwards the Marquis of Winchester, killed at battle of Magersfontein, 1899.

² Wilfrid Scawen Blunt.

are *always* smiling. Their 'deportment' is more dignified and fascinating than anything I have ever seen and it is a great pity that all the beautiful ladies in England cannot carry their heads and shoulders like these boys and young men do. They ask for 'Baksheesh' as you might ask for a match, it seems like an act of courtesy: one of them actually pressed half a crown on Sebright the other day who had been talking to them through an interpreter, and could hardly be persuaded to take it back. Harry Legge was looking at another, who smiling patted the ground beside him, and lisped 'Sit down, sit down' quite naturally and gracefully, like a nice child at a tea-party. They look more aristocratic and well-bred than a 'Marquis' of the 'Ancien régime,' even when eating strips of raw camel. There has been very little work to do here and we have been out stalking every morning at 5.30. Tuesday evening Harry Legge, John Gladstone and I rode out two or three miles. Harry got a shot at gazelle and I a stalk at 'Dig-Dig' (tiny gazelle). Wednesday morning Rowley Winn and I walked out and lay in wait on a rocky point two miles off, we saw two green and orange birds. Two gazelles suddenly walked round the corner under the rock, switching their tails, but as bad luck would have it, he shot just over the back of the leader; the angle of the hill was a very steep one, which accounted for it as he is a very good shot. Thursday morning Harry, Rowley and I had a great 'chasse.' We were sitting on the same rock half asleep when a jackal came and looked at us. Rowley missed him with his sporting rifle. 'Jackal canter away, not care one damn': then Harry shot at him with a Martini. Henry missed, but our friend hearing the noise of the bullet whistling, whacking the ground by him, and the ricochet humming away, put out his brush and legged it over the plain with his ears back, making us roar with laughter. Yesterday, Friday evening, I rode out on 'Refu,' Harry's charger, with John Gladstone, to fresh hunting grounds about three miles to the North-east towards the sea, along a dry 'khor.' We saw four or five gazelle feeding some way off, so John started off

to stalk them and I waited with the horses. He had hardly gone when I saw a donkey with a red Arab saddle on her in a bush sixty yards off; she was standing still and not feeding, as she would, I suppose, have been had she been left long, so I loaded my rifle and kept a sharp lookout, however nothing happened. John came back after fifteen minutes, having missed; we then decided that the donkey was nobler game than the gazelle; I tried all I could to catch her without success, so we drove her before us all the way to the zeriba of the 2nd Brigade (now close up to our own), here I managed to cut her off against the zeriba and, catching the bridle, led her (with great difficulty and persuasion) in triumph to our camp. This was a grand piece of 'loot' as she had an Arab bridle, saddle covered with red leather with a high peak, and a bell and 'Koran' charm round her neck. She will accompany me to the front on Monday, carrying my haversack, etc. I have got the bell—we are going to divide the rest of the spoil when we get back; I think he wants the saddle, and I am sure the donkey would be welcomed at Knoyle! if I can smuggle her home. She is rather wild and shy, but I got her to eat bread out of my hand this morning. When we got back we found that Rowley Winn who went out with Shute had had a tremendous stalk over three hills and killed an Ariel through the lungs with a gallery shot at two hundred yards. We took a lesson in 'Grulloching' (?) after mess from an Australian officer and celebrated the double event in whiskey and water, altogether 'a great day for England'! The men call all the natives 'Johnny,' most of the latter think it a greeting, such as 'Salve' 'How-dy-do' 'Bonjour' etc. and answer 'Johnny.' Others from bitter 'convoy' experience think it is the English for 'Chelo' (Get on), at any rate it is all the English they know. Last night the whole camp was kept awake by the sentries challenging an Indian whose camels had strayed from the zeriba; all along the line stentorian voices '*Halt!* who goes there,' plaintive voice from darkness 'Johnny, Johnny'; the sentries, seeing the joke, answered 'Pass,

Johnny, Johnny, all's well.' The men woke and roared with laughter till Freddy Stopford (now Brigade Major) dashed from the General's tent in a fury to stop the inexplicable uproar.

Thank dear 'Chang' for her letter. You have all been capital about writing, the 'Mail' is the only dissipation out here; now we are away from the base it is rather unreliable. However, let us hope you will get this pretty soon. Good-bye, darling Mamma, give my best love to all.—Ever your most loving son,
GEORGE.

33

To his Mother

SUAKIM,

10 p.m., April 26th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—This is only a midnight scrawl, sent in a sleepy hurry as I shall not have time to write to-morrow. I am in the Camel Corps and we have been suddenly ordered to the front. I went with the battalion from Handoub to Otao, nine miles, last Monday. At Otao the country changes and becomes all rocky, great piles of black basalt and pillars of granite shut it in on every side—all the country beyond is like this, only more so—there is not near water enough to move large bodies of men. However after Gladstone's statement, reported in a 'Reuter,' we expect to leave here soon; no orders have been given to that effect, on the contrary Graham has pushed everything on tremendously; we were ordered this afternoon suddenly to advance to-morrow morning to Otao and to make a reconnaissance from there, and I think this advance of the Camel Corps means that he has been ordered to retire and that it is a Rear Guard movement to cover the withdrawal of troops from Tamoulouk and Handoub. I am very sleepy and have to get up at 4.30 to-morrow and be shaken by a camel for twenty miles; so Good-bye, best love to all, thank Papa for his letter of the 10th which I received to-day,

a week late. If this expedition should go on, I am convinced I am in the right place, but it will not.—Ever your loving son,
 GEORGE.

34

To his Mother

6.30 p.m., SUAKIM,
 May 3rd, Sunday, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I have been moving about so much lately and yet doing nothing in particular, that this letter will be only a string of dates. I joined the Camel Corps, Thursday *April 23rd* and marched from Otao to Handoub and trained on to Suakim, drilled there three days and on *Monday April 27th* rode back to Otao, a grilling day. One officer, two men fell out and one camel died of heat apoplexy (I thought this a great triumph for us poor men). *Wednesday 29th* rode fifteen miles and back in direction of Esluhl. On Thursday got sudden orders to return to Suakim, so, *Friday May 1st*, off we rode again to Suakim where I am now, but not for long as after being inspected by Lord Wolseley to-morrow at 6 a.m. (he arrived yesterday) we expect to make a night march *somewhere*, as we have been ordered confidentially to be ready. So perhaps they are going to have a try at Tamanieb. The plague of flies here at Suakim is something beyond belief, they are just beginning to go to roost, thank Goodness, and the walls in the small tent in which Menzies and I sleep are black with them. In the day they fight with you for every morsel of food, and there are never less than ten in your glass. We lunch armed with fly whisks, and the traps we set of beer and sugar become tumblers of *solid* black in about an hour. At night, fortunately, they sleep, but, as they cover everything, whenever you touch your coat or blanket a great 'buzzing' arises in the dark.

On Wednesday we had a very long day : Reveille 8 a.m. breakfast 4, mounted by moonlight at 4.30 and marched off towards Tamluk soon after five. Reached Tamluk

7 o'clock, three miles beyond Tamluk the road, i.e. the bed of the torrent full of boulders which serves as such, lies in a pass from 300 to 500 yards wide with high rocky hills on each side, about seven miles long. At the end of this pass, which we reached at 11.30 a.m., we hoped to find water, but after boring away for two hours and leaving the bottom joint of the pump fixed in the solid rock, at a depth of 15 ft., we gave it up and started home at 2 p.m. reached Otao 7 p.m. (14 hours); this was the first time I have ever got on my mount by one moon and off it by the next.

Tuesday, May 5th, 6 p.m.

I must finish this off in a hurry, as although the expedition to Tamanieb was given up, we got confidential orders at 2 p.m. to-day to start on a small one to-night. The force to consist of Camel Corps, Mounted Infantry and 9th Bengal Lancers, the whole commanded by Colonel Palmer. We shall march off about 12 to-night when the sun gets up, but we take a long time saddling the camels, etc., so we parade at 10.30; consequently I have just finished dressing for *to-morrow*. I tried to sleep in the afternoon but was completely routed by the flies, although I tied my head up in a handkerchief and rolled a shirt round my hands and arms. I shall sleep on the top of my camel if I can, as far as Hasheen. We are going to 'Deberet' supposed to be about 13 miles beyond 'Hasheen' in the hills. A Sheik has come there with six hundred fanatics and has been firing on Otao and Tamluk (which are the other side of the hills). The Sikhs started by train this afternoon for Otao to cut him off on the other side. This plan has really been arranged with great secrecy, (we only gave out the orders at 5 o'clock) but I'm afraid it's odds on the Arabs. We have never caught them asleep yet, they have perfect information of everything we do. They fire from a hill one night, we carefully lay the guns on it, but they never come there again. They damage the railway, we send a train with thirty men in it to patrol the line, but we don't catch them.

From Tamluk they even sent out a party of picked men under Arthur Paget to wait for them 1200 yards from the camp, but they didn't come that night. Thank Papa and Mary very much for their letters. I shall not have time to write to them. I like the Camel Corps very much ; the men drilled capitally this morning. Tell that rascal Guy to write to me about the fun in Dublin, Punchestown, Free-lance, etc. All the little Arab boys here now sing, ' Wait till the clouds roll by '—but, as all their thoughts turn on ' Baksheesh,' instead of going on ' Jenny ' they make the refrain ' Guinea, Guinea ' and think it is a pathetic way of asking for money. I rode into Suakim after parade this morning and made them dive for piastres in the harbour, about twenty little black boys all diving together. I suppose there will be no war in Russia after all now. The Camel Corps has made me very keen about this business but I am afraid there is no chance of ' making a job of it ' unless we protect the country. I have never been so well and in such spirits before, I wake every morning fit to busk out of my skin. Good-bye.—Your most loving,

GEORGE.

35

To his Father

Saturday, May 9th, 1885,

SUAKIM.

Sunday, May 10th.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—You will see by the two dates at the head of this letter that I am beginning to be lazy about writing. I wrote last Tuesday to Mamma just before starting on our ' Dowar ' to Takdul. On that night we fell in at 10.30 p.m. We had paraded at 4.30 a.m. on Tuesday morning and drilled for two hours and I had ridden into the town in the middle of the day before we knew anything of the expedition, so I lay down at a quarter past nine in the evening and forced myself to sleep till 10 o'clock. The night was pitch dark, as the moon did not rise till 10.30 and the sky was clouded over,

consequently the difficulties of saddling the camels and forming up outside were very great. We arrived at the West Fort, where the 9th Bengal Lancers and Mounted Infantry were already drawn up at 12 o'clock, midnight, but owing to a delay in loading some water tanks we did not march till 12.45. We marched in the direction of Hasheen in column of troops in the above order. The Arab ponies whinnied and champed their bits, but the camels made absolutely no noise as we went swaying on like lines of great grey ghosts. We passed over the battle-field of Hasheen about 3 a.m., the moon was well up by then and I recognised all the ground and the remains of a white camel shot by the Scots Guards. Dehilbat Hill, the high one taken by the Marines and Berkshire, was on our left and we seemed to be *always* passing it and never getting on. As I was leading No. 1 troop I had to keep awake and follow the centre of the rear troop of the Mounted Infantry, but about 4 o'clock I felt as if I should never fully awake again, and swinging on the camel half asleep made me rather sick. At last the dawn began with red streaks straight behind us. It became quite light in twenty minutes showing us a valley one and a half miles broad with rocky hills on each side, Dehilbat standing out about seven miles to our rear. The 9th and Mounted Infantry then trotted off to the right, down a narrow valley at right angles to the one along which we had marched. We soon heard a shot or two from the enemy on the left of this valley, we then trotted after them over very rough ground, going in and out of three 'nullahs' without a fall, for one and a half miles, where we halted by the horses of the Mounted Infantry who were in skirmishing line on the first hill to the left. We formed close column at once, left the Marines and Australians with the camels (C.C. composed of five squadrons, No. 1 Guards, No. 2 Marines, No. 3 Shropshires, No. 4 Australians, No. 5 Sikhs) and advanced down a gorge to the left, parallel to original valley, Guards extended, Shropshires in support, Sikhs behind. I took the right half company up a hill to the right, Menzies the left along the bottom.

The enemy were retiring over a high crest nine hundred yards in front of me and driving their flocks up the bottom ; I fired some volleys at these and at some close by on the right, then doubled my half company and some Shropshires who had joined me for five hundred yards as hard as I could over three crests ; I got close shots by this and saw three roll over. I then doubled round the base of the high hill and after joining Menzies ran up a hill on the other side. Meanwhile the Sikhs (whole battalion) and Friendlies had arrived on the right from Otao. When the Arabs saw this they left their flocks in the valley and legged it, pursued by *our* Sikhs and the cavalry. Menzies and I had however cut some off who shot at us from behind rocks so we sent a section round to climb the only other side of the hill. The scene now became very funny as we stopped our men firing and got a Friendly to call on the enemy to surrender, our men shouting out 'Come down ! Finish, finish Johnny !' and one Irishman in a brogue roaring 'Put down your rifles.' We shot near them to frighten them and eventually captured seven prisoners. I have the sword of one, one of the old swords which I have wanted a long time, it is three foot long, made of steel with a little *knight in armour* engraved near the hilt, they call them 'Crusader' swords. I know nothing about them but at any rate they are very old, possibly 'Abyssinian,' as the Abyssinians were early Christians. The Lancers went about three miles down the valley and drove back all the flocks. The surprise was a complete one, we found all their fires laid and the meat hanging up in strips ready for breakfast. Austen in the Camel Corps, whom I left on the first hill, was wounded ; he went up to an Arab on the ground on the right,—wounded I believe by my men—when about ten yards off the Arab jumped up and went for him. He fired his revolver hitting him in the left shoulder, then in the right side, but still the Arab lifted his spear as he fired his third shot which blew the Arab's brains out. He was knocked over by the spear sticking into his right arm, cutting the artery, however a doctor was near and he is all right now. He has got their standard, which is

just like the others we have seen and taken, white with red border and red letters, 'There is no God but Allah, Mahomet is his prophet, Mahmud Achmet is the prophet of Mahomet.' We also got a letter from Osman Digna signed to the chief, giving him a pass to Jokar for four camels to draw supplies.

May 12th.

Two correspondents started to ride back but were attacked, one came back wounded. We marched off at 10 a.m., about 11.30 the enemy appeared on two knolls eight hundred yards to our right and began firing, wounding two of the Mounted Infantry, one of them—Sergeant Birch—in Coldstreams. The Mounted Infantry did very well riding out and firing volleys. We halted, formed square and fired volleys, none of our men were hit, though several bullets came into the square. The enemy retired and we started out again. We began to get very sleepy, I only just saved myself once from falling off till, at about 2.30 p.m., we heard a shot or two and saw a good many enemy on our left, same performance as before and on again. A signalling party had been out on Dehilbat hill; when we had passed this and arrived at Hasheen they came down (two companies of 28th Bombay) and were attacked by enemy from right, so we halted again and Mounted Infantry and 9th Bengal Lancers went back and drove them off for the last time. We made our triumphal entry into the camp with prisoners, spears, rifles, flocks, etc., at five o'clock, eighteen and a half hours after we paraded. I went to bed at nine, having been up more than forty hours, eighteen of them counting drill and ride on Tuesday, on a camel. On Friday, May 8th, we had a review for Lord Wolseley, the camels marched past splendidly. Since then we have been drilling a good deal. We had out a squadron of the Lancers to charge the square of camels, shouting and hallooing, but the camels never moved. The 'shaves' here have been innumerable; at one moment we were off to India, then to Asia Minor, then home, then autumn campaign here, on the Nile, everywhere, etc. etc. etc.

Your telegram which I received this morning, makes me think that Hartington must have made a statement last night, if so, I suppose this is all off. It is thought here that Wolseley and Evelyn Baring have both been urging a Nile autumn campaign. Lord Wolseley said to us (Camel Corps) that he hoped to have us on the Nile with him in the Autumn. The 'shave' here yesterday was that four English battalions were to stay; this would take one of our battalions, however to-day I think public opinion seems to be for a general scuttle. A storm of *rain* here on Saturday morning has brought out the stinks and made this place unhealthy; the nights have changed now and for the last week have been very oppressive. We wake up boiled in our own juice, instead of refreshed. Please congratulate dear Eva¹ very much from me; I am so glad the governor [brother] is enjoying his races in Ireland. We are going to have two days' racing here on Saturday and Monday next, but having no purse I shall not be able to rival his exploits. They will not hurry us back as they did coming out, so that even if orders came at once, I do not expect to be home for seven or eight weeks. The Grenadiers who have been here at Suakim ever since Tamaai have six officers and twelve and a half per cent. of men in hospital. I got seven letters from the family yesterday which was delightful. Have you heard the riddle, 'Why is my leg like the Nile?' 'Because the further you go up it, the nearer you get to My Tummy (Metemmeh).' Best love to all of you and to Alan.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

36

To his Mother

P. & O. DECCAN,
Monday, May 18th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—We are off at last, quite suddenly to us. Orders on Friday morning, embarked one o'clock,

¹ His cousin, Lady Eva Bourke.

on Saturday. You will get this a few days before we arrive. They expect to arrive on Derby day, Wednesday, June 3rd, however it may be Thursday or Friday, the 4th or 5th. I think we are going to disembark at Portsmouth but no one knows. I am quite well, feel deliciously slack sitting all day under an awning, looking at the sea and doing nothing—So idle that I shall stop for the present and finish this to-morrow !—

May 19th.

We expect to get to Suez about seven o'clock this evening. It is much cooler already and very pleasant. Sir G. Graham and Staff are on board, also a number of Engineer officers and 2½ Companies of the Scots Guards.

Poor Sutton is very ill indeed with acute dysentery, he was put on board the 'Jumna' at the last moment ; we shall hear how he is to-night. Harry White and J. Leigh in the Grenadiers have both got typhoid. I think Suakim got very unhealthy the last fortnight, the sick rate got up to eleven per cent. At present I am quite happy doing *nothing* on this ship and revel in it, 'no more blooming energy' for a fortnight at any rate ! But I expect it will not be many days before we begin fidgeting to finish our journey.

Give my best love to everybody ; tell dear Chang I am sorry I have not had time to write to her separately and am looking forward to being entertained at Hans Place. Wilty was very well when last I saw him and will follow soon. Please congratulate Lily¹ on her daughter. Harry Legge, Frederick and Sebright are all well, in fact everyone except poor Sutton and J. Ross. 'There's no more to be said' so 'Au Revoir.' I shall see you all soon, Hurrah !!—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Have you seen Lily ?

¹ Lady Lilian Wemyss.

37

*To his Mother**May 27th,*

S.S. DECCAN, ALEXANDRIA.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I got your letter dated May 6th here to-day, forwarded from Suakim. I loved getting it very much after a three weeks' break, particularly as it was such a *nice* one. I have only had one drive in the town, as I have had a headache, consequent on a 'crise de bile' brought on by the tossing between here and Port Said. So I feel rather slack, having been living on slops, but I am practically all right to-day having had a 'corker' of castor oil yesterday. We know absolutely nothing here, not only of where we are going but also why we were stopped. Different reasons maintain for about twenty minutes apiece, to wit: More difficulties with Russia—That G.O.M. is defying the world to internationalise the Canal—That the French are going to seize Canal on way home from Tongking, etc., etc.

The latest 'official orders' are as follows:—yesterday *afternoon* 'no troops to disembark' (joy); *evening* 'Jumna to disembark troops to camp at Ramleh' (sorrow). This *morning* 'troops not to go Ramleh, re-embark on Dacca' (joy once more); 12 *noon* 'troops from Jumna to go to *Ramleh*'! As it is impossible to guess what nobody can know I maintain philosophic attitudes. Fremantle got the command of 'Abassijeh' near Cairo, and temporarily that of Alexandria, whilst Lennox is ill. Frederick is to be his A.D.C. We are all very low about poor Sutton and Jock Goddard in the Grenadiers, who died at Malta. Our men keep very well though we have had two cases of typhoid declared since we came here. We scuttled just in time I think. Wilfrid Blunt's letter, which Papa sent me, is mistaken. *One* hand was indeed brought into our camp at Otao by a friendly, it was buried; the bush was searched and the owner found still alive though weak, his wound was dressed and he is all right. All about slavery is the greatest nonsense,

all the idle friendlies get *one rupee* a day for doing nothing (they offered our soldiers *sixpence* a day to work on the railway!!!). '*Women taken prisoners*' means their coming in, getting a dinner and slinking off again. I see the papers are making Takool (Taskdol I think they call it now) a sort of 'Sweet Auburn' before it was deserted, as a matter of fact Sadoun, the chief, only moved there a week before as it was handy for Otao and Tambuk and made night attacks *every night* until we turned him out. I cannot understand why Englishmen at home should think that merely crossing the ocean turns Englishmen abroad into Neros, whereas really soldiers, from associations in India and elsewhere, are always very soft-hearted to all black men between whom they distinguish with difficulty. I think there is still a chance of our being back in three or four weeks. Very best love to *all*.—Ever your most loving,

GEORGE.

38

To his Mother

S.S. DECCAN,

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, *June 3rd, 1885.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I write so as not to miss a mail but nothing has happened here and we have no idea why we are kept; if we do not get orders by Monday we shall disembark and go to Ramleh.—I have had a dull time all this week as my headache I told you about was a sort of slight fever, at least my temperature got up every afternoon, so I have been alone on the ship as nearly all the others have spent their time on shore. I was allowed to drive, however, the day before yesterday and am all right now, temperature normal again. It's made me a little thin as I have lived on my old old friends tea and toast. It reminded me of you and Guy and the 'Hamlet characters' at Hoddesdon.¹ I have been having lots of Quinine-and-iron. I shall hope we shall go soon, as I

¹ The time when the two brothers were recovering from whooping cough at their private school.

do not believe any more fighting will be screwed out of old Gladstone. We had a splendid alarmist rumour and false telegrams here only four days ago—that Russia had seized the Bosphorus, English shipping called in, etc., etc., but since then we have been very dull. All the natives in the Club here are very keen for us to take the country altogether. We had a lot of saluting and running up of flags on the Sultan's birthday. I feel very stupid and boiled owlsh and can't write. Give my love to everybody, particularly dear Chang and ask her to write me an amusing Society letter. I don't write to her because I feel stupid here and haven't been off the ship. *Your* letters are *very interesting* to me and please me very much. I hope to hear from you all to-morrow. Good-bye.—Your most loving,

GEORGE.

39

To his Father

RAMLEH CAMP,
June 10th, 1885.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We disembarked and came here yesterday. The Grenadiers and Scots have been here some time. We are in little 'Pal' tents like Gipsy hovels, quite close (50 yards) to the sea on a rough sandy beach : there seem to be a good many scorpions about, as one of our men was stung last night and N. Menzies this morning. —First of all, present my compliments to the real 'Confidential one,' Madeline, and thank her very much for the only letter I got last week. Barnett in the Scots Guards is very bad with fever, he has been delirious for three days, he overtired himself going to Cairo and climbing the Pyramids. I am all right again now, I have not been doing duty or anything at Alexandria and it has been very dull. There is only one drive along the Mahmondzeh Canal to the Khedive's gardens and I am tired of it. Yesterday the Khedive had a levee. Everyone went, I was sorry to miss it.

The Palace here is alongside the camp on the South. It was left to go to ruins by Ismail on account of a favourite

daughter dying there. The central block is used as a hospital. The Grenadiers and ourselves have each taken a great room in the wings to mess in, and we sit in the garden, now almost a wilderness, with thickets of oleanders in it and the dripping remains of a waterfall, with a ruined kiosk summer-house perched on the highest mound. It is a very curious place full of paved courts with weeds and bushes growing up between the flags. Our mess room is in the old harem. We get to it from one of the courts by a double marble staircase; there is a wide verandah outside paved with marble. The plaster is falling everywhere and the floors have given way in places. We got a good dinner last night at the 'Hotel Beau Séjour,' which was lucky, and breakfasted there this morning; I believe our mess will be started by to-night. Everybody rides about on very nice donkeys driven by Arab boys to make them go. You say Haah! the more surprised you are the better they go.

We have just had our first lunch in the Palace, only six of us lunched. There were no chairs or tables, so we sat in a row on a strip of red cloth in the middle of our bare and dilapidated banqueting hall, and had Turkish coffee on the verandah afterwards. We heard yesterday of the Government's defeat. I should like to hear any political gossip there may be. We hear nothing out here, but guess that perhaps it is French complications that are keeping us.

I must send this off to Alexandria now by Juden. Give my best love to everybody and ask Chang to write. Let me know about the sale of the horses last Thursday.—
Ever your loving son,

GEORGE.

40

To his Father

RAMLEH,
ALEXANDRIA, June 14th, 1885.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Thanks very much for paying off Cox & Co. I went to see Bloomfield the other day,

his wife was out, he gave me a long account of the bombardment of Alexandria. I think your sale was a good one, I think I should have let Johanna and Miss Moggy go. I wonder who gave £105 for Voltaire, it is an odd price, too small if they knew nothing against him, too large if they knew *all* his peculiarities; we are well out of him. We are all settling down here as if for a long stay, it is a much better plan than drifting on in great discomfort, doing nothing but say we shall get orders to-morrow, etc. I am quite right again now, doing duty, and shall go to Cairo at the end of the week. We are going a party, Tollet and Lady Julia who arrives on Thursday from England and one or two others. No 'sight see-er' is allowed to join this party, which is pledged to see what comes naturally to hand and not toil off to 'Mosques,' etc. The life here is monotonous but that makes it go quicker. We get up about 6.30 and bathe in the sea, breakfast at eight, sit in the garden, lunch 1 o'clock, sit in the garden, dinner 7.30, sit on the colonnade.

I am looking forward to hearing from you about Gladstone's resignation, etc. Old Chang never writes, will you write me a letter about her; it is sad to think that the original 'Hut' party ought to be on its way there to-morrow. General Stevenson telegraphed some days ago to say that if they kept us out longer they ought to send more officers, I think that is quite right, though of course really there is nothing to do here. If there was any it would be impossible to go on. The Grenadiers have lost:—one died, ten invalided,—Coldstream, one died, four invalided,—Scots Guards, one killed, five invalided. Total three dead, nineteen invalided, not counting Alan and Dalrymple who are on the Staff. I have counted as invalided those in hospital here who are waiting to get well enough to be sent home. I am afraid Barnett is sure not to recover as he is worse this morning. I find I was elected to the 'Turf Club' on the 7th of last March so I have told Cox to pay the subscription. I wish we had got back about now, as the 'Hut' and Guy coming over would have been great fun. I am safe into the first

half of the Lieutenants in the 1st battalion, owing to poor Sutton dying and Frederick going on the staff, or rather Alan going on the staff. If we stay out here much longer—which is probable—you might ask Webber¹ if he has a spare minute to write me a line, as I should like it very much, particularly here where it is so dull. Give my very best love to all. I hope no one will assume that we are coming back at once and stop writing in consequence.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—The Mail leaves early this week.

41

To his Mother

RAMLEH CAMP,
ALEXANDRIA, June 14th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I hope to hear from you next Thursday as it is some time since you have written. I saw a letter from Mrs. Sutton to Harry Legge very heart-broken, it is very sad his having died after all. Everybody else, all your friends, are flourishing. Cory and Holland are being sent home but I think they will be all right soon. We have many more scorpions here than at Suakim and are eaten up by mosquitoes and *fleas*! I never could catch a flea as you know and suffer in consequence, one escaped me this morning in my pyjamas that would have fallen an easy prey to your practised fingers.

We bathe every morning before breakfast, it is very like the Hyères bathing—lots of sea-weed, shallow water and rocks; I cut my knee on one this morning. Some of the gardens round here are lovely, I never knew what Oleanders meant (like little what's his name and the oysters), having only seen them in pots, till I came out here where they are twenty feet high, one mass of flowers, most of them pink, but some carnation or white. There are also lots of magnolias and bamboos which spread over your head. We get fresh bananas to eat that would

¹ Godfrey Webb.

make Pamela's mouth water. I have bought a box of real 'Turkish Delight' for the children, but when I shall be able to give it to them is 'more than I can say.' I regret most missing Guy as I suppose he will not get leave again and possibly we shall not be back in time to go to Ireland. I should like to spirit myself to the 'Hut' to-morrow. I am very well.—Ever your most loving son,
 GEORGE.

P.S.—Write soon and let me know about anybody you have seen that would interest me.

42

To his Mother

RAMLEH CAMP,
 ALEXANDRIA, *Friday, June 19th, 1885.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I wish you hadn't thought I was ill on the 'Deccan,' I only told you I had a headache. I hope no one else said I was ill.—At any rate I am very well now and go to Cairo this evening with Bobby Tollet and Lady Julia, (who arrived from England yesterday), John Gladstone and Shute. We are going in a 'Dahabieh' (why not call it a boat) to Sakkara to see the tombs. I have been—very considerably—ordered by my General not to climb the great pyramid. Part of our palace fell in the night before last in the wind, burying a lot of the Grenadiers' luggage. The day before yesterday the wind blew off the shore and we had 102° in the tents, quite like old times. Of course it really was not as hot as Suakim by 12° or 14° but these little tents give no protection to signify; but it is very muggy as the wind comes off the salt marshes. However we have got a good sea breeze again now and are all very fit. I liked your letter about the bazaar. Thank Guy for his letter, I will write to him when I get back from Cairo. Rumour here (utterly untrustworthy) now points towards going home soon, but none of us know anything. I suppose everybody in England will be busy with the new Cabinet and forget us

for some weeks. Sergeant Slade of the Coldstream has been here invalided, from the Camel Corps, he is a very fine fellow and likely to get the V.C. for Abu Klea : his account is very interesting. I shall have lots of opinions to give when I get home, there is a certain amount of disenchantment, when you get behind the scenes. If you call MacNeil's engagement a 'disaster' why not Abu Klea ? in both the enemy were repulsed with fearful loss : in both they forced some part of our formation. At Abu Klea the heavy cavalry, some of whom as far as I can gather, were actually *skirmishing* !!, retired slowly on the face of the square completely masking its fire till the Arabs were quite close. Burnaby was outside and Sergeant Slade who had been with the skirmishers close to him. The heavy cavalry (all on foot you know) bulged inwards when the charge came. Burnaby called them every name under the sun and remained out, Slade says, fencing as if in a gymnasium until, he declares, he was shot by our men either to the right or left rear ! Slade then lay on his stomach and crawled back into the square. The battle of 'Karbekan' has dwindled sadly in importance, and most of the romance of it disappears when we find that General Earl was shot looking into a hut and Colonel Eyre by his own men behind him.

Poor Barnett was buried here three days ago, his brother arrived yesterday. The 'Khedival Hotel' here is crowded with invalided officers from the Nile. They were actually going to send off the invalids three in a cabin, this would have finished the fever cases very quickly ; however they have been ordered only to put two. I must go now and dress. Give my very best love to everybody, the children are splendid to go on writing, as they do, such capital letters.—Good-bye, your loving son,

GEORGE.

43

To his Mother

RAMLEH CAMP,
ALEXANDRIA, June 28th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—The fate we have all been dreading has fallen on us at last: *Cyprus* 'to embark immediately.'—You hinted, somewhat, at wanting to come out in your last letter, mind you don't under *any* circumstances; orders may, generally are, changed and I might have to pass you on my way back to England. Also if we go to Cyprus and stay there we shall get *leave* and I shall come to you. I should be wretched if I had not the certainty of your all being at home, so that if chance came I could dash off and see you.

I believe Lord Hartington has been bullied into recalling us and that we were to have gone the day before yesterday; but for our own friends to have done this! 'Et tu Brute.' It is all very fine 'Menacing Russia' but I'm afraid we are getting tired of that even. I had a lot to say about Cairo but this has put it out of my head.

Tuesday, June 30th.

Two days settling down has put it into my head again, and we are all really jollier now we are 'put out of our pain,' and have got something to do again. Waiting six weeks for orders is wearying work. I went to Cairo on Friday week. Saturday we went to the Bazaar in the morning, it was all I could do not to buy everything; first John Gladstone and I went to the carpet man in a stone court, boarded over high up to keep out the sun, with moth-eaten cornices of carved woodwork running round, through a dark curved archway off the bazaar; I bought a Persian rug. In the bazaar,—about two and a half yards wide with the sunlight filtering through the boards laid across from one house to the other sixty or seventy feet above your head—I bought a Persian brass tray. Considering that all the shops are like toys with

the man sitting crossed legged in them and all the wares looking twenty per cent. better than they are, it's a wonder I did not buy more. I got some embroidery too. I shall try and arrange to send some of these things back. In the afternoon we went to the mosque of Sultan Hassan, the finest Arab building in the world, built 1350 A.D. I am afraid it would furnish a good argument against the 'Ancient monument' people. As it was built so it has been left, untouched, the carved woodwork is rotten through and hangs in shreds, with a falling beam sticking through it in places, the pavement all loose so that the outer court appears to be carelessly strewn with pieces of alabaster, marble and porphyry. It is 'Ramadan' now so the fasting Arabs were washing themselves in the fountain and lying about on the floor. Next we saw the mosque of Mohamed Ali, which I did not care for,—a pity so much alabaster should have been wasted; but the view from the citadel is *wonderful*, the town nothing but mosques and acacia trees, and the green line of the Nile with the three cornered sails moving slowly up and down it, and the Pyramids like ghosts in the distance. At 7.30 we went on board our Dahabieh. There was a faint north wind that just pushed us along against the stream, the sun set on our right behind a grove of palms and avenue of acacias, behind us Cairo and the bridge over the Nile. A palace on the left bank lighted up by the reflected sunlight as if by Bengal fire and in front the high sail pointing straight up into the sky with the moon balanced on its very tip. The wind dropped at midnight and we tied up to the bank, every now and again the stillness was broken by the shouts of Arabs, who nearly run into you floating down without steering. We bathed early Saturday morning but could not get on till 3 o'clock as there was no wind; when it came it was the 'Khamsin' from the desert and we had 109° under the awning. We got to Bedhersteen in the evening and walked between the palmy groves and fields of durra, (corn-like reeds seven feet high) with the 'Thadoops' being worked everywhere on the same principle as in the days of the Pharaohs. We

got up at four o'clock next morning and started on donkeys at 5 o'clock as the sun was rising behind us and reached the desert at 6.30, the desert which stretches for three thousand miles. The 'Step' pyramid is supposed to be the oldest building in the world, some make it 4000, some 6000 *before* Christ. When we got to Mariette's house, built of mud, the only object beside the pyramid in sight except the tumbled heaps of sand, the Sheik with the keys did not turn up so we lay down and slept for an hour on the stone floor. We then went to the 'Serajem'—the tombs of the Apis bulls: there is nothing above ground but a stone door in the scooped out side of a heap of sand, you light candles and walk through the galleries, the first one blocked by one of the enormous sarcophagi, 20 feet by 8 high, which has been left, I suppose, on the last occasion on which they meant to bury a bull; the rest are standing in alternate chambers on either side. They had all been opened but one when Mariette found them. He blasted this one open and found the bull covered with gold ornaments and '*the footmarks in the sand*' of the workmen who left the chamber 4000 years before. Next we went to the tomb of Li—I have written more than I expected but will finish another time. I now retire again into the gloom of 14 days' post, or more from England, alas! Good-bye, darling Mamma. Give my very best love to all.—Your most loving, .

GEORGE.

44

To his Father

RAMLEH CAMP,
ALEXANDRIA, June 30th, 1885.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We are off to Cyprus as soon as we can manage it. I am afraid that, as usual, we shall all start together to-morrow or next day and when we arrive at Timasol find there is not anything like enough transport for a Brigade. We are to encamp four thousand feet up mount Troodos, twenty miles inland as the crow

flies but thirty-eight to march as the country is mountainous. We shall depend on local transport, which I should think would be about equal to carrying the baggage of a half battalion at a time. It is three days' march and we shall have to clear the ground of the fir trees, so I foresee a busy three weeks. We have requisitioned for 9000 to 10,000 blankets (5 per man) as it is very cold there, however we are sure to start without them. How long do you think we shall stay there? One can only guess at what is going on. I think the reasons are these:—The Mahdi is coming to the fore again and says he will advance at the end of 'Ramadan.' (2) It is possible, is it not, that M. de Giers has been very polite, 'delighted at Lord Salisbury coming in, etc., etc., but thinks it would be more satisfactory to all to wait until his lordship has a majority in both houses.'—Now I don't think there will be more fighting here at present or more serious complications with Russia, *but* if the slightest hitch occurred about either place, and we had gone home, etc., there would be a newspaper outcry saying that Salisbury was as bad as Gladstone, this might come just before the elections. By doing nothing and leaving us here, they can't say that and the last government will be responsible for our being here. I am afraid the deduction from this is that we shall be here when Parliament dissolves and consequently have to wait for the next Government to come in, this would take us on till January or February next. If we are to stay out they certainly ought to send out a draft and officers and let us have two months' leave each. Lambton is to be our Brigadier, so Stirling will command our battalion. We have only twelve company officers now (two captains and eight lieutenants). Is there any good book of 'the Crusades'? I should like you to send me any books giving good accounts of Saint Louis being taken prisoner here, or of the Genoese and Venetians in Cyprus and the taking of 'Tamagousta' by the Turks. I think I would like my guns too, 100 cartridges, six new flannel shirts, shooting boots, homespun shooting suit, one pair ordinary riding breeches,

butcher boots and gaiters, 'Bottlebrush' [footman] will be able to find them. Rowley Winn has sent for his civilian servant to come out, so the best plan will be to enquire at '11, Grosvenor Gardens' and find out when he starts and he will take them out. In your last letter but one you speak of pay, allowance, etc., mounting up. I thought too that I had got plenty of money but found a letter from Cox on my return from Cairo that undeceived me. I have not had time to think much of these things and mentally thought I had about £300 in the bank. I got wrong by crediting myself with all 'Janet's' price, part of which you paid by paying my bills; also I thought I had paid interest on my £2000 all along instead of which apparently it came in a bang of £100 a month ago; also I find I was elected to the Turf Club in March, £47. Before I got Cox's letter I had spent a good deal in Cairo so I am rather poor. I don't want money as I can overdraw up to Michaelmas, but I like letting you know that I have not got a pile. I liked going to Cairo more than anything and *much more* than I expected; up till now I have been travelling about and seen a 'little war' and other things and everything has been just what I expected, in fact nearly everything in the world has been described so often and so well that travelling is superfluous and writing descriptions ridiculous when you ought to be able, instead, to quote chapter and verse from some book where the description has been done once for all; but Cairo and the Nile is more than anybody can expect. Of course the size and age of the old Egyptian pyramids and temples is stupendous but the 'human interest' of these is the least in the country and I have always said that 'human interest' is what I care for (would prefer the 'Tiber' to 'Niagara' and like the Alps most because the Cymri slid down them on their shields). The Pyramids make me pity the people who built them; but when I am on the Nile, in Egypt, it seems more wonderful to think that since the 'Shepherd Kings' the country has been conquered by every country the world knows of, 'Assyrian,' 'Persian,' 'Greek,' 'Roman,' 'Arab,' 'Turk,'

'French,' 'English.' You can float down slowly against the wind, with a moon over the top of the high lateen sail and think if you please of the old Pharaohs and 'fair Rhodope' who sat on the third Pyramid and bewitched travellers; if you are in a conquering mood you can 'do it in Cambyzes' vein' or Khalif Omar's or Alexander's or Pompey's or Cæsar's or Napoleon's, who said that he fought the Mamelukes with forty centuries looking down on him. . . . I think most—as I care more for very human things—of Anthony and Cleopatra; . . . and Saint Louis being taken a prisoner with all his army after starting from that dark church at Hyères . . . and Hypatia.

No time for more.—Your most loving, GEORGE.

45

To his Mother

OFF LIMASOL,
CYPRUS, *July 4th*, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—It is very puggy and damp hot to-day so I am flabby and will not write more about Egypt or anything at present, this is only a line sent back by the ship (H.M.S. 'Orontes') to Alexandria to be posted there when she has left us in this 'retired and secluded spot' to our own devices. I do not know when the post will go again or anything (this is one of the bad days when things go wrong). They say Ross who was to have undertaken the mails has collapsed, but I don't know for sure. I think there is sure to be a boat of some sort run between here and Alexandria. I like coming here *very much* (if we are not to go home). I am dead sick of Ramleh and should hate treeless Malta swarming with staff officers. Here we shall 'live so free under the greenwood tree,' at least above the greenwood tree, as most of them will be beneath us at the top of the mountain. Sam Hall has been sent for to become senior major of the other battalion. *N.B.*—This means no emergency here or hereabouts, ergo *Leave* when some more come out to help. We are such a small band at present that I shall command a company

from to-morrow. The Grenadiers disembarked to-day. They will reach Zigo twelve miles from here, about 10 o'clock to-night. Do not think of coming here or *regret* not doing so, you will believe me when I say it is impossible (you know I'd give anything to see you). We camp six thousand feet above the sea, thirty-eight miles from the shore, last four miles only accessible on a mule ; there are no railways or carriages in the country. I am looking forward to it. Instead of distasteful certainties such as Ramleh and Malta you can revel in imaginary Arcadia—until undeceived. Dream of buying the 'good indigenous pony' *cheap*!! (ha! ha!). Shooting mouflons, the wild sheep of the land (Ho! Ho!!). When we land and find two or three screws at £30 apiece, mythical mouflons and 25 per cent. charged on all firearms brought into the country, it will be time enough to complain, but till then I can pretend that we are sixteen gentlemen bored with life who have retired to the wilds to amuse themselves with field sports and the flow of wit, like the spendthrift Italian gentleman in some poem (Papa knows which I mean). Only sixteen! in the battalion and when Monck's papers go in from here (his father having ordered him to leave as he, Popsy Monck, is ill) there will only be fifteen. Seven companies out of the eight commanded by lieutenants, with me one little, two little, three little, four little, five little, six little, seven little nigger boys. We are rather brown. I got your letter, the children's and dear Chang's just before starting; I don't think you need be alarmed about my figure, 'Ramleh fat' was a figure of speech, very comparative!! We are most of us a little thin, and grey hair is the fashion, I have got a good many and Harry Legge is quite grey. So is Mildmay Wilson in the Scots Guards who was in Nile Camel Corps. We had a great stroke of luck before starting, as the Camel Corps just hit us off by one day, arriving at Alexandria on Wednesday, the day we embarked. We did not start till Thursday so we had a jolly dinner at the Khedivial (Convivial) Hotel with Boscawen, Hugh Amherst and the two Dawsons, all looking very well.

I saw Airlie the day before and drove down to the ship with him. Thank Papa very much for his long letter received on Tuesday. I would have given anything to have met Guy, but we ought to be all jolly together again at Knoyle at Christmas, perhaps before. I am very well, felt rather 'far from strong' on Thursday, as did most of us. I think heat makes a ship a good deal worse, my cabin is on the fourth deck downwards, counting the stern as 1st, so my port does not open. I expect to write again Tuesday week and hope to hear soon. If I don't telegraph, direct Cyprus.—Ever your most loving,

GEORGE.

46

To his Mother

H.M.S. ORONTES,

LIMASOL, OFF CYPRUS, *Sunday, July 5th, 1885.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I wrote you a letter yesterday but it has gone ashore with the baggage. I am trying to get it back, but in case I don't I send this with love to all as next post is doubtful. Have no time to write more, disembarking baggage in barges, slow and hard work; at it till seven last night and began at five o'clock this morning: march twelve miles to Zigo this afternoon, expect to arrive about 9 o'clock. There is a rise of 4000 feet in the last four miles to Troodos, they say. We expect to get there Wednesday night.—Ever your most loving,

GEORGE.

47

To his Father

July 8th, 1885,

PERIPAEDIA, CYPRUS.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I will go on telling you about Cairo. After the Serajem we went four hundred yards to the tomb of Li; Li was a huge landed proprietor apparently; he married into the royal family and was Chamberlain to Pharaoh. There are several chambers

in the tomb which is completely buried in the sand. They found seventeen statues of Li in it. All the walls are decorated with the most delightful and graphic frescoes with the paint still on them, showing Li's agricultural and sporting pursuits, men reaping, driving and killing oxen, taking the calves from their cows, etc. Thousands of servants carrying bread and meat and birds by their necks. The best one is Li fishing for enormous fish in a blue Nile and catching a hippopotamus with a rope, another hippopotamus is catching a young crocodile, up above are trees with lotus flowers on them covered with birds and weasels climbing up after them. Li is always three times as tall as anyone else and Mrs. Li generally accompanies him, sitting at his feet with one arm affectionately round his leg.

We rode our donkeys back by 11 o'clock. The wind was against us so we did not get far. The next day the wind was also against us and we spent most of it tied up to the bank. That night we floated down as far as the Nilometer. Hassan (our Dragoman) fetched carriages from Cairo and we drove to the Pyramids of Ghizeh, we looked at them from below, making two Arabs race up and down for money. We saw the tombs cut down into the rock and the Sphinx, near which is some brick-work of the Romans built to keep off the sand, now sixty feet deep all round. We saw the so-called temple of the Sphinx close by, it is nearly buried, but is very splendid, the best I saw, built of red polished granite blocks on an alabaster floor, no carving or cement, nothing but great blocks fitted together. We drove into Cairo, went to the Gold and Silver bazaar, and dined in the Esbekieh gardens.

Harry Legge has got his leave and I am going to do Adjutant, this pleases me very much. I am afraid there is no ground to drill on up here but there is lots to do. Stirling is a very 'fussy' man, but I'm not sure that that is not a good thing for 'learning,' and he is fair and will give me a good chance. The ground is very rugged and is in fact a pine forest intersected by torrents, so the camps are very much scattered and irregular and the whole

battalion is employed in making roads, paths, washing places, etc. I have been bounding from rock to rock all the morning with Stirling, planning a path to the brook at the bottom of a ravine. After five months of heat, dust, flies, etc., this is like living in a bath of iced champagne; I feel as if I could buck out of my skin and never be tired again. The damp green bracken that grows everywhere is like a cool compress for one's eyes to look at after red and yellow Egypt. The sun is hot, but like a winter sun in England, for there is always a perfectly cold breeze, and at night it is *very* cold. I slept in five blankets and revelled in them last night. I slept till eight; I don't know how I shall wake in the morning now there are no flies or sun to call one at 5.30. Everyone is delighted with the place, the men laugh and sing all day long. Harry has left me his groom and horse 'Kefu' to ride; I am very fond of his horse, he is very like 'Vandyck' and very confidential. I shall economise a good deal by doing Adjutant, as I shall not leave the place for a day till he comes back and need not buy a pony to make excursions, which I intended to do. A good many of us dined with the 60th, who have a half battalion here, last night, very pleasant dinner. Monk has sent his papers in and they are accepted. Fortescue sent his in this morning and I think Sebright will follow next (the last information private). I like all this. We shall move from here at the end of September or beginning of October, as it becomes too cold, and go, I suppose, to Polymedia, the winter station near Limasol, unless they send us back to Egypt.—Ever your very loving son,

GEORGE.

Just got your letter.

48

To his Mother

TROODOS,

CYPRUS, *July 10th*, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Here we are on the top of our perch. I enjoyed the march up immensely, the country

is lovely, quite worthy of 'Venus' the goddess of Cyprus. We disembarked on Sunday by double companies, No. 5 and 6 at 3 p.m. We reached the quay in sailing boats at 3.20 and began marching, through Limasol, first over some flat ground dotted like a park with olives and locust bean trees, then rather to the right up a valley, the most beautiful I have ever seen, along a path on the right slope with a mountain stream on the left full of boulders with oleander *bushes* growing wild on the banks and little spits of mud; the hills on the left were topped with limestone, in blocks like the top of the Clinks at Isel.¹ The whole place overgrown with thyme and myrtle and all the plants we saw at Hyères; further on we turned up a smaller stream to the right, banked over with *myrtle in flower* in masses fifteen yards across—that reminded me of our last day at Knoyle. Olives and locust beans scattered here and there and little vineyards perched about in the valleys. The sun set among the hills and we stumbled on in the dark, the men in tremendous spirits, say from 5 o'clock to 8.30 when we arrived at Zigo. This was a lovely place. The next morning I went down and bathed in the river, another one rather larger: the country like the cricket field at Isel, a high bank on one side, three times as high as there, then a rushing river and flat fields on the near side with a few olives instead of hawthorns, on all the banks oleanders and cut-leaved planes and *lignum vitæ* growing wild and rugged; some Australian pines half way up the bank. We bathed in a gravelly hole under a rapid, holding on by a root of a tree. We stayed there that day, bathed again and started in the dark at 2 o'clock on Tuesday, lovely sunrise. We crossed a deep valley between limestone hills very steep and halted at 8 o'clock at Peripaedia and stayed there Wednesday. Thursday we started at 2.45 up a mountain-pass. Going up hill is like magic; you walk out of one country into another in an hour. We had to march in single file with a ravine and stream like Dashhead on the left, on the right red iron stone rocks and a white

¹ Isel Hall, near Cockermouth, Cumberland.

limestone cliff opposite ; the olives became stunted and the oleanders, but they held out to the last, appearing here and there in sheltered holes ; we halted at Platus for coffee at the foot of the steep hill with nothing but firs above us. Then we began climbing, it got cooler and cooler as we climbed till we got here, where there is nothing but big firs and bracken. The ground is all rather red from iron except in one place where there are the remains of a volcanic peak all tumbled about and full of copper crystals. I am going out for a walk now.

Saturday, July 11th.

Have just got your letters and raced through them once in a hurry in case any answers are needed. Just had parade as Adjutant and 'Orders' and lots besides, so only few minutes to write. I am mugging up Military Law, etc., etc., so as to pass for Captain next March if we get back. I shall like all the books you mention. I have read 'Petit Bob,' it makes me roar with laughter but it will be welcome. I wished Harry Legge good luck and God-speed this morning at 6 o'clock. He has got his leave and will go and see you when he arrives in London. I got letters from Dick and Webber,¹ very welcome, give them my love. I will write to dear Chang, next week, tell her.

Love to all.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

49

To his Mother

TROODOS CAMP,

Saturday, July 18th, 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—We have only just heard of the mail going out this morning so there is no time to write. I am very well and have got lots to do now, in fact I manage to fill up twelve hours a day with something or other. I like the work very much. Next week we begin musketry

¹ Hon. Richard Grosvenor and Mr. Godfrey Webb.

which is a bore, as I shall not have the battalion to drill in the mornings. The odd part of it is, I rather like the 'Blue paper' part of my duties as well as the other, writing official answers to the questions which come at the rate of four an hour from the Brigade office is like a 'new toy' to me, but I daresay I shall soon get tired of it. We played a cricket match (on cocoa-nut matting) against the 60th on Thursday, we got 41, they 223. I was very stiff after it as I fielded at the bottom of a rocky hill and had to run up it for the ball about three times in an over. In the second innings I got 15 runs. There is a wooden lawn tennis court here, I have played twice and am going to to-morrow at 12 o'clock. I meant to have written to Chang but this sudden mail has caught me 'napping' so give her my best love and better luck next time; and if the next mail does not arrive in time wish her many happy returns of the 3rd of August; I wonder if you will go to Stanway or to Knoyle. 'How happy could I be with either.' Best love to everybody.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

50

To his Sister, Mary Elcho

MOUNT TROODOS CAMP,
CYPRUS, July 21st, 1885.

MY DEAREST CHANG,—This letter will arrive a day or two late for your birthday, but it will have to wish you many happy returns and good luck all the same. I wonder whether you are all together at Stanway or whether you have honoured Knoyle with your presence. I met a lot of donkeys loaded with planks on the mountain path to the Rifle Camp. 'Kep,' Harry Legge's horse, does not like donkeys.

44 Belgrave Square must be a regular 'Egyptian Office' and Mamma 'Secretary for the Soudan Warriors who have returned,' and the wives of the absent ones apparently have a set lunch at 2 o'clock, to which five or six 'Egyptians' sit down every day: I wonder if you have ever assisted?

I have had letters from Webber and Dick full of your praises. I am rather stiff and stale from lawn tennis and mountaineering and feel too stupid to write to-day, better luck next time !

Saturday 25th. No luck ! every day here is the same, up at 6.30, 'Orders' 8 o'clock, parades, business and riding up to the Brigade office till LUNCH at 1 o'clock. Piquet at penny points till 4 o'clock, then Brigade orders, then walk or lawn tennis till DINNER ; by the size of the writing in the above programme you will understand the importance of two of the daily duties and the insignificance of the rest. The path up to the Brigade's office and Rifle camp is my 'bane.' I told you about the donkeys, well, yesterday, I started off spick and span to speak to the Colonel and Adjutant of Rifles, mooning along in the sun up the hill, horse sleepy, Bang ! Helmet knocked off by bough, get off (swear) and get back to camp only to start the same way again to Brigade office. Remember the bough, doze off ; Bang ! Helmet chucked off by same bough !! (swear).

I can quite imagine you munching in the streets on the way to Handel Festival, sandwiches and buns ! I suppose and bits of sticky paper fluttering about and settling on the cushions. You quite omit to say who attacked and who defended the morality of marrying without love. If I had been there I should have maintained that it was not only immoral but the *only* crime against Morality. I should like to see 'Nevvy.' Strongly 'marked eye-brows are signs of 'Tempin.'

The men have made their tents here very amusing, all bedded out with moss and sprays of pine stuck in the ground with devices and inscriptions in stones, e.g. 'The Old Warrior's Rest,' 'Jambouk *Villa*,' 'Suakim *Cottage*,' 'Exiled from Home,' 'Lost ! at or about Cyprus a battalion of Guards, whoever will give information resulting in their return to London, will be rewarded.' Some of the Coldstream stars, cross-guns, etc., are very clever, one modest tent has 'No. 1 Company Coldstream

Guards, the Pride of the British Army,' and another mournful tent two imitation tombs to two of their men who are dead. This place is much better than Ramleh, where we had one and sometimes two funerals a day. Two of our men however died yesterday, but from fever they had in Egypt.

There are hardly any animals in this country and what there are are all birds and beasts of prey. They must have a poor time as I have seen nothing for them to prey upon. The birds are—eagles, vultures, ravens, jays and hoopoes. The ravens are extraordinary, I can count seven now wheeling and croaking up in the air; there are as many as rooks in a small rookery and not more wild; their wings make a tremendous rushing noise, so that you look up expecting at least to see the Great Roc with Sinbad in his claws. The only beasts are foxes, who come round the camp at night right up to the tents. Write again soon if you can manage it, anything about people I know, society, new beauties, twaddle of all description is very acceptable. Now Harry Legge is gone I am quite separated from ordinary people, also any of your original and admirable reflections on men and morals. Gordon's journals are splendid, I delight in an eccentric man upsetting the odds which routine, formality, 'Foreign' and other offices always have on their side, and making the latter appear ridiculous. Tell me about 'Stanway' if you have another of your far-famed parties. —Ever your loving brother,

GEORGE.

51

To his Mother

MOUNT TROODOS CAMP,
CYPRUS, 3rd August 1885.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I wonder how you all are at Aix-les-Bains. The mail here has broken down so I have not had any letters here at present, but expect some by the 'Poonah' which brings half battalion of the 53rd

Shropshire Regiment straight from Suakim where they have been left all this time. I am afraid they are very shaky and the march up will finish some of the weak ones. The bullock trunk has not arrived yet, but may come on the 'Poonah.' This is dear Chang's birthday. It seems a very long year to me since I drove up to Stanway with a box from 'Charbonnel and Walker' as a present.

We were inspected by Clive on Saturday, he praised the way the men turned out and stood on parade. Saturday afternoon we played a match, our sergeants against the sergeants of the 60th with the Adjutant playing on each side. It was most amusing; we got 48, they 145 and we 47!! a crushing defeat; I got 9 not out, and 16. We had a fearful wind here two days last week, it blew great guns and was bitterly cold. Evening dress here consists of cholera belt, flannel shirt, thick flannel trousers, flannel cammerbund, hunting waistcoat, thick patrol jacket and great coat, and still we were not happy, but sat shivering over hot whisky and water, expecting the tent to go every minute. As bad luck would have it the only tent which went in the night was Major Nott's, our paymaster, who is very ill. The wind broke the pole in half. The red dust with this wind covers everything. It is very nice again now but they say that this wind blows once a week in September. The 'Chasse' opened on Saturday, the 1st of August, nobody shot anything. Tell Pamela the men have got a young vulture, taken from the nest 'poor little thing.' It stands about two foot high but always on its hocks, as it is not strong enough to—or won't—walk, with two half fledged wings each the size of your leg, and an enormous white head; it eats any quantity of chunks of raw meat. The man who got it was driven off by the old ones one day, but came again and found them away from home. I have read two 'Crokers,' Gordon's Journal, and am finishing the 'Ottoman Turks' which I like very much. I liked 'Gordon' very much. Did you see Harry Legge before you started? Clive told me he had met Papa at the arrival of the Camel Corps.

I hope dear Madeline's face is getting well. Best love to all. Thank Fraülein for the love sent in Madeline's letter. Good-bye.—Your very loving son, GEORGE.

52

To his Mother

16th August 1885,

MOUNT TROODOS CAMP, CYPRUS.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I have only time for a real scribble. We all think we are going home soon, but if, as I believe, the Grenadiers embark first, what with the march down, etc., it will be the middle of September before we are back. You will get this about the 26th August and might write to some responsible person and tell them to telegraph to you the day the ship that we, 1st battalion Coldstreams, are on sails, we should get home about ten days after that. I try not to believe it too much for fear of disappointment but I am afraid I do believe it, as I can't stop singing and whistling all day. The 'Times' says we are coming back and they have stopped taking in more than one fortnight's supplies here, so let us hope it is true. I had no letter from you by this mail and as the cholera is raging between us I feel rather cut off. None of the things have arrived yet and they will all be fumigated I suppose. I am *very well*, and robust, have been playing lots of lawn tennis. I have had two letters from Harry Legge and another from old Webber, who is very faithful. The Grenadiers' mess tent and another was burnt the night before last, it burnt in about two minutes, fortunately there was no wind or the whole camp and part of the forest would have gone, as everything is as dry as tinder. I saw the sunset from the top of Olympus the other night, splendid, but bitterly cold. Olympus throws a shadow on the mist over the sea on the east as the sun sets. I may get your letter yet as they may be fumigating it. Very best love to all.—Ever your very loving son, GEORGE.

To his Sister, Mary Elcho

22nd August 1885,

MOUNT TROODOS, CYPRUS.

MY DARLING MOGS,—I just got your delightful letter ten minutes ago. I have read it two and a half times; I should not venture to answer on such slight study, but I have not a moment more to spare and am scribbling against time, so I have a very vague idea of the numerous subjects you touched on. At last!! we are going home. I had no hope of this and had got into such a plodding way of going on, bored to death, that I could not imagine what getting orders for home would be like; then all at once they came and I am dazed like the ‘Prisoner of the Bastille’ and no doubt when I get to London I shall cry out, ‘take me away from this noisy vicious town and send me back to my peaceful Isle.’ I am hard at it, began at 6.30 this morning striking tents, carrying them about, mixing them up, and unmixing them, giving orders and countermanding them, burning the bed straw, and generally riding the whirlwind and directing the storm, turning our peaceful glen into Pandemonium. I enjoy a regular professional hunt more than anything and am quite happy. I like doing adjutant during the march and embarkation as it fills up one’s time completely. Now I want you to do something and be responsible or ‘confidential’ as Papa says, and that is to write or telegraph directly you get this to Mamma, wherever she may be, to say that I embarked on the ‘Orontes’ on the 26th August and consequently might arrive on 7th or 8th of September, so that if she wants to get back before I arrive she can do so. I hope somebody will be in London, it would be a little sad to make a triumphal entry applauded by the house painters and welcomed by the drain openers, —but no matter, the great thing is to get home. I do not know if I shall get leave when we get back but will go to Scotland and see you as soon as possible. Hope

Nevvy is well and will be pleased to see me. Love to Hugo. Time! Good-bye or Au Revoir à bientôt.—Your loving, in the devil's own hurry, BROTHER GEORGE.

54

To his Mother

22nd August 1885,
CYPRUS.

DARLING MAMMA,—No time to write, we sail in 'Orontes' Wednesday, 26th August, arrive about 7th to 10th of September.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

CHAPTER III

SEPTEMBER 1885 TO APRIL 1887

Coldstream Guards—Engagement—Marriage—Voyage in France
and Italy—Leaves the Army.

55

To his Father

ISLAND BRIDGE BARRACKS,¹
DUBLIN, 26.11.85.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—The Elections are capital ! Your telegram was greeted with enthusiasm. Old Saxe-Weimar² was dining and immensely amused at the vengeance of a Subaltern of the Guards against an Ex-War Minister. I daresay Guy has told you that on Tuesday he rode in one of the best runs ever known in Meath, 8½ miles straight on the map from near Dunboyne to Ratoath, and then 2½ to the right and back to ground near Ratoath. Guy pulled up ‘Stop and fetch it’ at the end of the straight bit. The next morning we enquired after his health : ‘How is the horse ?’ ‘*He’s* sore all round.’

Yesterday I tried a horse of Manly’s with the Ward. We ran for about 50 minutes over the Meath county. He is supposed to be a puller. Everybody said at the meet, ‘Oh ! you’re on that horse, are you ! You’ll find him hard to hold,’ etc., which is not encouraging. He does pull and rush a good deal, but I just managed to hold him all the time and only got down once. He certainly can jump and stay. The head man at Manly’s, ‘Larry,’ calls him ‘a staming honter,’ but, for all that,

¹ On a visit to his brother, who was in the 16th Lancers, quartered in Dublin.

² Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, commanding the troops in Ireland.

he is rather a handful. I expect I shall buy him as Guy urges me on, wishing for the credit, with Manly, of having brought him a purchaser. To-day we go and see him at home and have 'a school' and to-morrow we are going to have a ride on two horses of a man called 'Palin' and try them. There were quite 100 people out with the stag yesterday, Trotter, Luke White, old Morrer, who was once master, etc., etc. The latter said to me, 'On a strange horse in a strange country you ought to be given a certificate,' which was a great compliment; but then I'm afraid in Ireland people are very complimentary.—
Your loving son,

GEORGE.

56

To his Father

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE, S.W.,
December 14th, '85.

MY DEAR PAPA,—We had capital fun at Stanway. On Monday Miss Margot,¹ Evan [Charteris] and I hunted, Evan on his horse Decider, Miss M. and I on hirelings from Cheltenham. We had a short run in the morning and a ringing run in the afternoon with a moderate scent and lots of jumping. I like the country there very much. We upheld the sadly tarnished honour of Stanway in the hunting field; Miss Margot cramming her rather sticky hireling over brooks with rotten banks, and landing on and smashing a rail on the far side of a drain to the amazement of the small and steady North Cotteswold field. However, I must give Hugo the credit of the best show of foxes I have ever seen. The place swarmed with them. We viewed three away from a clump near the house out of which we killed 170 pheasants at a stand! We got about 380 head a day, all the pheasants are high ones. The Pembrokes enjoyed themselves and were delighted with Miss Margot. Lady Pembroke asked her whether she thought her spirits were so good because she

¹ Miss Margot Tennant, afterwards Mrs. Asquith.

jumped about so much ; filled with envy she picked up her skirts and hopped round the room in the hope of being happier. Timmy was splendid all the week ; his political guide on all social and economical questions is now Lord Radnor. He quotes him constantly at every turn ; whenever Lord Pembroke spoke Timmy came in with a ' that's just what Daddy Radnor says,' or ' I don't think so, Daddy Radnor won't have it,' etc., till Webber and I nearly died of laughing ; it was all the funnier as Miss Margot had not the faintest idea who ' Daddy Radnor ' was.

In one of the games played after dinner an ' adverb ' had to be acted in the answers given to questions by a person who had left the room, i.e. everyone had to answer ' hypocritically,' ' languidly,' etc. Timmy took the house by storm by answering ' DIPLOMATICALLY ' to Webber, the questioner, '*it would take a cleverer fellow than you to do that.*'

Mary is a capital hostess, the lunches out shooting were marvellous, $\frac{1}{2}$ a hot woodcock each and delicious hot coffee. Timmy was delighted with it. ' None of your old-fashioned sportsmen for me,' etc. (Evan) ' My father always sends out nothing but sandwiches.' (Timmy) ' Yes, that's BEASTLY.' I did the part of ' Sam ' after all. The acting went off capitally, ' Hugo ' was splendid and his make up capital. Mary had over a man from Cheltenham to play the piano afterwards ; he was recommended to her by a friend as being available when not electioneering or drunk. On this occasion he was both. Miss Margot said there was not enough go in his playing and so poured him out champagne. He ended by ordering Evan to get him some more, playing the ' Blue-Bells of Scotland ' with variations and making a speech about the ' Disloyalty of the Scotch ' from the piano. I had the greatest difficulty in preventing Evan from punching his head in the drawing room, but managed at last to lure him out of the room.—Your loving

GEORGE.

57

To his Sister, Mary

DEAREST MOGGY,—I present this to you, the result of our conversation last night.

Shall I believe that this fair world expanding
 In wondrous beauty, 'neath th' eternal skies,
 Of highest splendour past all understanding,
 Where God's bright gems do ever set and rise ;
 Where all we see is an incentive and the prize
 Of loving knowledge ; peopled with brave men
 And women clothed in beauty's Godlike guise,
 Is ruled by cruel chance ? Is but a pestilent fen,
 Lit by deceiving exhalations ? A foul den

Strewn with the corpses of our brightest hopes
 That rot insensible and unavailing,
 Where stunned and sickly reason feebly gropes
 And seeing nought, hears but the sound of wailing,
 The muffled growls and hideous laughter railing
 Of the Hyæna pack of doubt and lust
 That gnaw heroic limbs and tear the failing
 Heart from the warrior erstwhile brave and just,
 Leaving his bones to rattle and his arms to rust ?

G. W.

Feb. 4th, 1886.

58

To his Sister, Mary

QUEEN'S GUARD,

ST. JAMES'S PALACE, S.W., *March 26th, '86.*

MY DARLING CHANG,—MANY thanks for your nice long letter. I was hoping you would write and thinking of stirring you up. After saying this you will think it odd that I should have been so long answering, but it is impossible to write (except a line like this to show one is alive and appreciates being written to) when suffering from my two *désagréments*, i.e. restlessness which deprives me of ideas, and compulsory inaction which deprives me

of news. All you say about the 'melancholy luxury of gazing at a twig' gives me a pain in my inside, my favourite way of experiencing the delights of melancholy ; still I quite agree with you that it is better to be alive, sensitive and irritable like a sea anemone, than mummified like dried seaweed ; but somehow I am not quite so orthodox on this point as I was when most of my sensations were pleasant, and feel it would be comfortable if one could mummify for a week every now and then, for a breathing time, to take a pull at one's feelings and enjoy the small pleasures in life.

All this week last year I spent at MacNeil's zareba, and I am not at all sure that it was not a preferable life to this of frowzing on guard and wasting one's time and money without amusing oneself or doing good to anyone else. My old liver has been going it, culminating a week ago in a 'crise de bile' and feverish attack, which I stemmed with quinine, so that I feel rather slack and stale now. On Wednesday we had our Point-to-Point in the Blackmoor Vale ; it was a great day for Madeline, Pamela and Fraülein ; we had 16 starters ; Guy was 3rd and self 4th. I thought Guy would win ; he and I made the running most of the way, but were beat by some heavy fields at the end, 2 light weights coming in in front of us. I am going to ride again at Aylesbury on Tuesday, and the week after I go over for 3 nights to Harry Bourke's and ride in the Meath point-to-point races : at least I think he has a mount for me. I have not read 'Anna Karénine' yet ; from what I hear it seems a melancholy, upsetting sort of book, like 'Fumée.' I have been, rather, plodding away at my books about 'Voltaire,' 'Rousseau' and 'Diderot,' and the middle of the last century generally, and have just finished Ockley's 'Saracens' ; they were very fascinating people ; like all people thoroughly in earnest, their lives give great pleasure to those who have nothing to be in earnest about. At least I think this is the great charm about early Jews, Christians, Saracens, Turks, Buddhists, etc., and all the other early religious or political people, that they knew they were right and everyone else

wrong ; whilst we only know we are wrong and think everybody else is too. For novels I have been reading 'Adam Bede' and Dizzy's 'Coningsby,' and French ones which always make me uncomfortable. I think of Stanway as a delicious place ; it must be very nice being there with the Spring coming. Spring always takes me by surprise and is so much more beautiful and wonderful than one ever expects, that one feels one has been a fool to bother about anything when such a wonderful and lovely thing takes place every year. There is a good deal of consolation to be got out of Spring, *when it is there* ; when it is not, whether in nature or the inner man, it is impossible to realise it through a medium of black skies and biting winds ; and even although the Spring does come back in a general way, still the *individual* flowers never come again, *never*.

'I hold this thing is true and all the rest is *lies*,
The rose that once has blown, *for ever* dies,'

as Omar Kháyyám says. Have you ever read 'Omar Kháyyám' by Fitzgerald ? You would like it, I think.

I feel that you must be very happy down at Stanway. I think you ought to be, for 'Nevvy' is so very fascinating, I shall be very fond of him. I am so glad you are coming up at the beginning of May. I was afraid perhaps you would be later. We will read books and discuss them and have fun. I WILL have fun. I feel annoyed like Shelley when I am not happy. Do you remember in 'Rarely comest thou, Spirit of Delight,' the Spirit of Delight is the thing to catch, if we can, for oneself, or at any rate to help others to catch it.

Give my love to Hugo.—Your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

P.S.—This is a longer letter than I expected to write. Write again soon if you can.

59

*To his Mother**March 29th, '86.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I cannot come Wednesday ; this is a *GREAT* disappointment to me, as I am on guard Thursday and cannot get off. I am just going to dress for my solitary walk to the Bank and dine alone on guard there, which makes me in the dumps.

But you know that it is all different : ‘ When the lamp is shattered the light in the dust lies dead.’

‘ Forget the dead, the past ? Oh ! yet
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it,
Mem’ries that make the heart a tomb,
Regrets which glide through the spirit gloom
And with ghastly whispers tell
That joy, once lost, is pain.’

I did not mean to break out into Shelley again, as I have put him by for the present and been reading memoirs and things that do not make one uncomfortable.

It is very odd how differently a book reads at different times. I am now reading and devouring ‘ Marcus Aurelius ’ that I have read before and liked rather ; now I can’t put it down, and next to you he is the best comfort I get of a severe and heroic sort. There is no nonsense about him, or false sentiment, and his manliness is refreshing, and I like the way he goes on hammering into one that man is a ‘ social animal.’

Write to me when you get this. I suppose Spring has come at last, but here it is not nice—a souging wind and torrents of rain—whirra whirra——

I lunched with Harry Legge yesterday and dined with Dick [Grosvenor]. These guards are too close together—to-day, Thursday and Sunday. I think I must run down on Friday and spend Saturday with you.

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

60

To his Sister, Madeline

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE,
March 31st, 1886.

MY DARLING MADELINE,—This is to wish you many many happy returns of *to-day* (not *the* day, as you will only get this to-morrow). I am *so* disappointed at not being at Clouds. I hope Guy will dine with me before crossing and we will drink your health. That rascal old Vandyck turned it up yesterday, he refused the first fence and then jumped on and off it; when we came down to the big water jump he hated the crowd and tried to cut it all the way, finally plunging in with his head against the far side. I got out lower down and jumped the rails back into the course, but the crowd were all round shouting, as the course was badly kept, and old V. reared and kicked up such a dust that I got no further.

I hear you got the brush on Monday; mind you have them all stuffed.

Yesterday was a beastly day for our races, rain and wind, and very muddy. Mrs. Vine [the housekeeper] is here, very stately and attentive, quite unhappy at my not having tea before marching to the Bank.

Again I wish you long life and lots of luck, from your very loving brother
GEORGE.

61

To his Sister, Mary

QUEEN'S GUARD,
ST. JAMES'S PALACE, S.W., April 12th, '86.

MY DARLING CHANG,—I am a brute not to have written long ago, particularly as your last letter was such a nice one. I have felt that I could not write, I don't know why. I have just read a book which you really must read before setting up your 'salons' and beginning to educate 'nevvys,' 'Mémoires de Madame D'Epinay'; they are delightful and frank to a degree; she makes no bones about her

'affaires de cœur,' though I daresay she tells the story in her own way, and makes poor D'Epinay out a very sad dog. (Everybody is talking so much that it is impossible to write.) I went over to Ireland on Tuesday; very rough, the boat was one hour late, the wind was deafening; my hat made one swoop from my head into the sea 200 yards off. . . .

(Interval for dinner, etc.)

12 p.m.

I had sent my servant on, so arrived hatless and minus luggage, in the vaguest and most storm-tossed frame of mind. *And so*, as the stories say, I drove on a car to Amiens Street, buying a rather jaunty 'Arry 'at on the way, and sat down to a quiet tea and toast at the station, almost happy in the thought of 20 minutes' peace and the aforesaid tea and toast. But, Mary, a middle-aged and agitated lady in widow's weeds came up and asked me if I was a loyalist and a protestant. I bowed and said I was loyal to the backbone and an Englishman with no bigoted religious belief; she then implored me to take her to a police station or escort her to Belfast, as she was in fear of her life, etc., etc. I explained that I only had 20 minutes at my disposal, sternly refused to travel alone with her, tipped the guard and saw her safely locked into an empty carriage, and finally left her reassured at Drogheda. From Drogheda I had a 15 mile drive to Hayes, and found them just starting to the Royals' ball; so popped on my clothes and on again, dinnerless, to the gaiety. Party in the House, Lady Mandeville and sister Miss Yznaga, Algy Lennox and 'Tops.'¹ Good ball. Guy there very flourishing; felt tired and would have liked going to bed, for once, but had to pretend I liked staying up to support Mrs. Harry,² who was kind, and enjoying herself immensely.

Next day, Thursday, 'Meath hunt races,' long drive, bitter cold day with hailstorms; sat with Mrs. Harry all day. American ladies too miserable for words; I felt almost shy of going to talk to them, they looked so cold,

¹ Charles Hartopp.

² Mrs. Harry Bourke.

shivering in wet patent leather shoes and straw hats. We revived them with port wine.

Friday hunted with the Meath on one of Henry's horses ; big country, got into two ditches.

A tragedy was being enacted during my flying visit to the Emerald Isle—a real difficulty to which the old plan of duelling would have afforded an easy and gentlemanlike solution. W—, a good rider and prominent member of hunt, used to be a great friend of little Mrs. —; B—, also good rider, etc., but rather a snob, takes his place about 4 months ago ; in the race B— rides his own horse, so W— is given the mount on Mrs. —'s mare ; B— most outrageously takes his place at a fence and cannons him ; they both fall and are jumped on by the others. W— swears at B— and Mrs. — abuses W— for losing the race and for blaming B—. Next day, out hunting, before the world B— rides up and says, 'I thought you were angry yesterday, but now I hear you say I took your place at the fence, I call you a d—d liar' ; to whom retorts W—, 'You — if ever you speak to me again I will smash your head.' This I think too grotesque and undignified for words.

Saturday I dined with Guy before crossing back. It was a heavenly eve. Gorgeous sunset over Dublin Bay. I sat alone on deck, it reminded me so much of the journey home last Autumn ; there were the moon and stars, just the same, like a neglected friend who welcomes you back, and the rippling sea and the throb of the screw ; the sunset died away and the lights of Kingstown receded between the isles into darkness in the West. Streams of mad wild sparks tore and darted from the funnel, and at last the moon set and all was dark and the wind got up and groaned, and the sea looked like liquid pitch, so I went down shivering to sleep and wrote the irregular midnight nonsense, guiltless of metre, which I enclose. (Mind you burn it at once, as it IS rubbish.)

Darling Chang, this is a very mad and vague letter. I will try and write a more sensible one soon. I am looking forward more than I can say to your coming up

here. So au revoir. (I wish Hugo luck at Ipswich.)—
Ever your most loving

GEORGE.

APRIL 12TH, '86

The sun lies down in purple and gold
On a lapis lazuli sea,
And the opal isles now close to enfold
The bay and the town where still you may see
The yellow lights twinkling merrily ;

As the sun's last kiss dies out on each wave
The tremulous lips of the sea
Stretch quivering up, if perchance they may save
One last gleam of love's ecstasy,
Then softly fall and sigh, sigh wearily ;

And sighing still, they catch the moon's bright beam,
And sighing smile in light inconstancy,
And smiling love her for her cold, clear gleam,
As Sappho loved ;—the past fierce love a dream,
A dream ! The love that scorned eternity !!

Murmuring she will be mine—not now—
Throned in the zenith of the purple heaven,
But when her course is run and she sinks low
Down to my arms who now before her bow—
Surely she will repay the love that I have given.

Each spark from the funnel boldly flies
In hope to inflame the sea,
And longing for one embrace ere it dies,
Flaunts hither and thither across the skies
Lit with hope of the joy to be ;—
And is gone—And is known no more.
An atom of soot. Was it known before
For all that it loved and was bright ?

The sapphire sea from shore to shore
In shimmering glory dight,
Lips love-songs forth to the Queen of night
Who soars above in a flood of light . . .
Then slowly sets and heedless glides from sight. . . .

All light is gone ; gone is all love,
 The keen wind whistles thro' the shrouds above
 As the drear ship shudders through the moaning flood
 But lately fair and bright, now dark as clotted blood ;
 All light is gone, though anon a spark still flies
 Unheeded is its life, useless its agonies ;
 All light is gone ; gone is all love.

G. W.

62

To his Mother

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE, S.W.,
April 16th, '86.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am coming to see you at Clouds, whatever happens, on Monday. I had arranged to stay the whole week, and wanted to bring the H. Legges, but of course they have put a Brigade field day on Thursday and changed our guard to Friday. However, if we can both get off the guard, I think it would be a good plan to get them to come then, if possible, as Harry and I could run up for the field day and return. It is the only time I can leave London till Derby week, as on Sunday week I go to St. George's, and on May 7th drill in the park begins. Still do not count on more than my company, and that only from Monday to Wednesday. I stayed a day, as you know, at Eaton. Then I went to Ireland ; they were very pleased at my coming and very kind. Guy looked *very well*, everybody is devoted to him. I dined with him the night before I crossed back : a heavenly night, sunset over Kingstown, and moon, stars, and all my old friends of last autumn. Since I have been back I have had more to do. On clear days I go by the 9 o'clock 'Underground' to Colonel Hales, a crammer, and work for the exam. It is very odd, but working again amuses me enormously and makes me quite cheerful. Harry and I sat side by side at two desks, and were asked by Hale '*Which was the major*'!! so I suppose he looks very young and inexperienced, or I look 'dam old.'

Lady Airlie more than fulfilled her promise of asking me to meet Lord W., as I dined with her on Tuesday, a most interesting party. I think asking people who move in entirely different and even antagonistic planes is a good plan, as they are all on their best behaviour. The ladies were four, Lady Airlie, Grisel, and the Duchess of St. Albans (rabid against the Government), and Lady Ponsonby. The men (5), Count Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador, who was very condescending and agreeable to me in French; Lord Wolseley, who sat next me at dinner; Mr. Cadogan, and John Morley, prudently placed opposite the Duchess. On Wednesday I assisted at the political demonstration at Her Majesty's Theatre, and enjoyed it immensely. I sat between Harry Legge and Bingy Wenlock; everybody was there, and all in high spirits. It is badly reported in the papers. I danced with joy at Hugo's victory; everybody is delighted at it and rather surprised. I have been to a dance at Lady Hillingdon's. Last night I went to a play with the H. Legges, and supped at their house. Have been drilling all the morn. 'Freddy' has returned from Egypt and lunches with me to-day. There now, you know all I am doing. Jack Campbell dined with me on guard. I shall ask him another time to meet Harry Bourke if I can. I look forward to Monday.

Love to all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

63

To his Mother

THE RED HOUSE,
ASCOT, June '86.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—It has been very nice down here till to-day, with rain steadily pouring and the grass getting greener and greener till it makes one bilious.

The party here is Durham and Lady Nelly, Vyners père, mère, et fille, Major Swayne—a soldier one sees about on the staff in Ireland—Douglas Dawson, and self. A

large party close by consists of the Londonderrys, Zetlands, Hastings, Houghtons, Duke of Portland, etc. We are going to dance there to-night. I sent for Johanna [a mare], quite forgetting to ask Papa, so please tell him there are very good stables here and Durham's horses and stud groom. I got up early yesterday and saw the horses exercising; they look such nice toys in their cloths, with big bang tails and eyes like saucers and little muzzles sticking out—it is a pity they are so expensive. After that I played Lawn Tennis with Douglas. In the evening I rode in the park with the Londonderrys, etc. This morn I rode on the course at 7.30 in the rain—it was nice and refreshing.

Poor Douglas has fallen a victim to my energy, as he has had rheumatism from cold bath after tennis.

Do read Ruskin's letter to a parson in to-day's 'Standard,' Thursday, June 10th; think of me when you read it, and see that Chang and all worthy people read it too. My best love to dear Chang and all the others who may be about. What a triumph the division was. Randolph C. is down here quite the hero of the day.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—I forgot to tell you the suite of my adventures on Monday. I arrived at 11.30, got the last fly with driver stupid with drink and sleep, started off for 'Red House.' 'Yes, sir, Red House, sir.' Long pause. 'I think I'll get down and ask,' etc., and on and on right round the course, plagued by drunken tramps directing drunken flyman. I then began sending Caswell [his servant] to all the houses still alight; whilst he was away we had an interlude with two drunken policemen, real Dogberry and Verges, who took the flyman's number and said 'There's something queer about this. Of course, sir, you're all right,' etc. For $\frac{1}{4}$ hour I sat inside with the windows up and boiled with indignation, but laughed at last. When all the lights were out in all the houses, I went from door to door, Caswell climbing high spiked gates and ringing people up, usually without effect, till

we came to one house whence a voice, 'Coming down.' Out came little man in dressing gown. 'Well, what was the division?' *Caswell*: 'Is this Lord Durham's——?' 'D—D—D——' and flight of *Caswell* over spiked gate. Rang up the right house at 2.15 a.m.

64

*To his Mother**July 4th, '86.*

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Is not the weather heavenly? not a bit too warm if you wear no clothes and live on barley water and cigarettes, but too warm for reviews at Aldershot. We did have a day on Friday. We paraded at Chelsea at 9 a.m. and marched to Nine Elms and trained from there to Farnborough via Guildford, owing to an accident, arriving at 1 o'clock or a little after; from there we marched to Cove Common and gave the men pork pies and a pint of beer; we only had a few minutes ourselves to get a drink at the Grenadiers, as we fell in again at $\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 and marched through clouds of dust to the ground. The men had already begun to fall out at Cove. To add to the fun of the thing, they formed us up more than $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the intended alignment, and marched us all in line of Quarter Columns without any intervals to speak of, so you may imagine what the heat was in that formation, and the dust so great it was impossible to see 10 yards. Then we took Review Order and stood and stood with the sun in our faces. The men began fainting first. Then after standing for twenty minutes or more at the shoulder, the officers began to go; it was most comic and disgraceful, first Ross and then Shute were escorted reeling to the rear. I was just thinking how absurd it was for anyone to faint, when I began to feel very funny and Dick Grenfell said 'How white you are!' and in another moment everything turned black and I found myself supported off by the Sergeant-Major who stood at the end of the front company 'fielding'

our fainting forms like a wicket-keeper. I was right again in a moment, in time to see Grenfell carried back and laid on the ground, and so it went on. The Sergeant-Major twice went out and said 'If you do not slope half the battalion will be down.' However, no one was the worse. One of the Scots Guards men nearly died, as he elected to faint just as the Queen went by, so no one undid his tunic or anything for two minutes; then the doctor came and said he had nearly died. We then formed up to march past, most of us with splitting headaches. After this we began our sham fight at 7 and stopped at 8.20. There was only one water-cart for the three battalions, so we got no water till past 7 o'clock. We then marched back from Cæsar's camp where we stopped to Farnborough, arriving about 11 o'clock. We had a halt at Cove for two or three minutes, and the Grenadiers who were camped there, had soup in mugs for us. I never knew anything so good as that soup and the bottle of soda I drank with it. We got to Waterloo at 1 o'clock, and Chelsea at 20 minutes to 2. I was not sorry to take off my bearskin. I was all right yesterday, riding at 8 before going on guard. There was a capital charge of the Hussars in the field day in which one man was a good deal hurt.

Mind you keep old Guy's head out of the sun.¹ How I wish I was at Clouds. I feel *very* doubtful about getting through my exam. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next.

Very best love to all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

Do you like this? It is supposed to represent a lovely lady brushing her hair at a window at night.

Thy silhouette against the yellow light
 Moves, an epitome of every grace;
 Thy shapely rounded arms of glistening white,
 And lovely hands, each an attendant sprite,
 Hover about the beauty of thy face,

¹ His brother had concussion from a fall in a race in Ireland.

And loose the long, soft tresses,
 Glinted with gold,
 Brushed from the pure caresses
 Of Cherubs wafted down to nestle in the fold
 That circles and adorns the gleaming loveliness
 Of that entrancing neck whose wonder, I confess,
 In words of mine may not be told.

Tell me really if you think there is any music in it. I like it best though it is small and irregular in metre, because I think there is something caressing in its rhythm.

65

To his Mother

PIRBRIGHT CAMP,
 WOKING, August 12th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I do like your letter *very much*. I do not know why I have not talked to you more, I feel that you always know what I am thinking. In your letter you have written exactly what I think and feel as well as if I could have said it myself.

True love is sweet tho' given in vain, in vain,
 And death is sweet that puts an end to pain,
 I know not which is sweeter, no not I.

True love is sweet and 'devotion' is an occupation, and I can't live without some ideal to live for. So I do not think ordinary rules apply to me; I mean worldly rules of the best way to ensure one's own happiness. I do not think she will love me, but as you say she will never make me unhappy and I think she likes me and my devotion. And she is so *gentle* and has such a '*gentle heart*' and such a refined mind that she gives me a higher ideal of womanhood than I could fashion out of any other. . . . She makes one despair of the world because other women are so different from her, and hope for it because she has been born and reared amongst their littlenesses and meannesses in England, now. She has gone now to Eaton,

and I do not know when I shall see her again. The two worlds of dreams and books are much more real to me than the third of things and people one meets. My dreaming does not prevent my working or my being kind and gentle to others, so if this dream helps me, let me dream. I feel sure there is no necessity to marry a girl for her youth and breed fools to be as uncomfortable and useless as oneself—(I can write to you when you write to me, but as I am in a seething state all I write is, I daresay, or some of it, morbid, but that I can't help, and I do not mind you, Darling Mamma, knowing what I am). You know that I have been very *hopeless*, hopeless of everything. I am hopeless now of doing any great or useful thing but I have one tiny ray that by devotion I may make one other than myself a little happier without neglecting my duties too much and thus live a life instead of dawdling altogether through a useless existence.—Possibly,—in my hopelessness I feel, certainly—I shall never be called upon to do anything, still if my dreaming of being one of Arthur's knights gives me a nature capable of a knightly act and I were called on to do one, I could do it ;—I hope, but hope very humbly and diffidently that I could do it, for my pride is gone and I know how I vary and how base and idle I am sometimes.

In saying that you like my *last*, I feel untruthful for I have written others and not shown them, irrational and hardly true ones, or true rather of passing phases that I have gone through. When I know how you love me I feel as if it was not true, not to show them all so here is one you will not like written when in a wild mood seven or eight weeks ago.

Hard by the noisy street I stand
 With straining neck and upturned eye
 Hearing my heart beat in an ecstasy
 Of hopeless passion ;—gazing on no Land
 Of Promise, real although denied ; but fann'd
 By burning winds of hot desire
 My sickening brain reeling and on fire
 Evolves a lying mirage dancing o'er the sand

Of dull Despair—an image of a bliss
 That never was, nor can be, Here
 Or Hereafter, yet for one phantom kiss
 Of my 'belle dame sans Merci' tho' it sear
 My lips and heart and hurl to the abyss
 Of utter Hopelessness my Soul; without one fear
 Of failing in my purpose, counting full the cost,
 I do lay down all hope in life, of Fame,
 Of Joy, of Love,—nor count it shame
 Thus to enroll among the Legion of the Lost.

And here is one utterly untrue and unreasonable suggested and written for me by the Fiend, as she is incapable of being anything but perfectly gentle and pitying, and could never be 'careless' of anyone's feelings or turn 'lightly' from anyone or anything.

Lash with the scorpions of thy just contempt
 The fond temerity of one who dares to love,
 Stamp on my upturned face and careless place
 The little heel I love upon my heart
 Then lightly turning make me faint with pain,
 Till voiceless from the agony, I scarce may whisper out,
 With pain-parched lips and throat, that still I love—
 So shall I know that I have gladly laid
 At thy dear feet all that a man can give,
 A free gift, freely given, to cherish or to spurn;
 So shall I know the wild exultant thrill
 Of gamblers who have staked their all and lost—
 Scorning the mocking laughter of the world
 I still will bless the day, that did impart
 To these, now grief-worn eyes, the dear
 Delight of gazing on thy Loveliness—

I have made a full confession to you now and you must send me absolution by *next post*!!!

There is one other little one I like just describing a fact, do you know the little vivid dreams one has of a loved one? I just dreamt that I was holding her hand and looking at the blue sapphires on her white arm, and that I looked up and saw the lovely expression in her eyes,

I then woke, bending forward, sitting up with a start, so I got out of bed, 5.30 a.m. and wrote this :—

Gazing upon the sapphires on thine arm,
 I dreamt, that lifting up my doting eyes
 To Thine of sapphire, I found again the charm
 Of dreamy Love-light, mix't with sad surprise
 At the World's wrong, that in the daytime lies
 In those sweet seats of Love.—Then woke to be alone ;
 Starting with throbbing heart, straining as it tries
 To beat on Thine.—Ah ! Sweet, that we were one
 For, see, my Soul for ever worships thine upon its Throne.

And then I got into bed again and went to sleep. I like it a little. Good-bye, darling Mamma, I have written to you now, I know you have wanted me to speak, and I have wanted to and could not. Write to me soon and do not mind the two bad poems. I am in another phase now.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

66

To his Mother

CLOUDS,

SALISBURY, August 15th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am here but must go out so enclose—

I begin again. Papa has just been in to say that there is no hurry, so will write more—

I am here with Harry Legge on a lovely Sunday as fine as the one we had a fortnight ago—but not so amusing—

Thank Pamela for her letter. I liked getting it very much, do M. and P. whirl round in the Waltzer with Prussian officers in firemen's helmets ?

I enclose a note from Sibell.

I also enclose wild Rhyme of the Moor, tell me what you think of it. It is called 'A Rhapsody' so that is why it goes faster and faster, of course it is more satisfactory to read 'Epipsychidion' than to write oneself, but it fills up the day.

I have read it critically several times (I wrote it quickly, straight off, and do not like to alter it) and sometimes feel as if I had nearly caught the spirit of the moor in the first stanza, at other times I think that it is only because I know the moor well and see and feel it myself and that what I write could not convey anything to anyone else. Tell me what you think. They want to go out now. So Good-bye, darling Mamma. Best love to M. and P.—
Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

PIRBRIGHT, *Aug.* 13, 1886.

A RHAPSODY

My Life has become a dream,
And I know not whether
A dream of joy or of pain,
As I lie on the Heather,
Watching the vapoury stream
From the marsh steal over the plain,
Wreathing with ghostly kirtle
The alder and dull green myrtle;
Watching the Sunlight wane,
Gilding the wind-worn pines,
Lone sentinels on the confines
Of the darkening purple land
Flecked with the cotton rush sown by the hand
Of Will-o'-the-wisp by night;
The silence becomes more intense
And hearing an absent sense
As I follow the night-jar's noiseless flight—

And now that all is still—let me dream of thee—
Amidst a life become a dream the one reality.
My blood like ice steals slowly through each vein,
My heart scarce beats, lest my brain
Should fail to conjure thy presence and show me thy face—
Here in silence at last—should fail to recall thy grace—
Now I do see thee! and seeing in ecstasy shiver,
Thy loveliness—thy form—the sapphire hue
Of thy soft eyes more delicately blue
Than the hare-bells that by me quiver—

Far away from all noise of men,
 I can gaze on thee now ;—at my will
 I can set thee afar on the fen
 To see thee approach and so fill
 My Soul with the joy of thy motion,
 I can make thee draw nigh, in devotion
 I can lift devout eyes ; for a while
 I can see thy face near ! See thee smile !
 Hear thee speak and from speaking desist
 With a little low laugh that enhances
 The grace of thy throat and entrances
 My thoughts, till all thought in a mist
 Faints and swoons, and my vision is gone,
 Yet feeling thy presence I move thro' the Lone Land
 not alone.

67

To his Mother

CLOUDS,
 CATERHAM, August 22nd, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I found nothing to do at Caterham on Sunday so I came here by the last train last night to return this afternoon. Sibell in a letter tells me to send you her 'very dear love.' I enjoyed Pirbright a good deal, and was very sorry to be taken away. They are all fighting over my body now, Lambton saying he wants me back. Papa and I have been discussing the project of my going as unpaid A.D.C. to R. Bourke. He approves. I think a little change of scene and action would be a godsend to me. I have been reading a good deal lately which is pleasant. I have no news. S. is very kind to me in writing often, very good letters and is a great companion in the way of reading, better than darling Chang, as she reads quickly and writes in about five days her opinion of the book or by return of any piece of a book that I write about. I saw a great deal of dear Evan [Charteris] before he started and gave him the palm stick I brought back to bring him luck. Lord and Lady Wemyss were very low at his going, quite terrible.

Timmy dined with me too, he is going to take great care of Evan. Harry Legge and I were a great deal together at Pirbright. He came here last Sunday and was very nice.

I consulted him as to taking an unpaid A.D.C. ship, he recommended me to do so if I could, as we have plenty of officers to do duty. He regrets not having been abroad before taking the Adjutancy. Our company improved in their shooting a great deal and were quite keen about their training. Harry and I both gave them lectures; altogether the work at Pirbright with lots of reading thrown in and walks in the evenings was satisfying. The work at Caterham is not so but fidgety. I do not care for working with recruits any more than I should like to be a schoolmaster and take an interest in preparing boys for the exceedingly problematic event of one in a thousand of them becoming a distinguished man.

Darling Mamma, write to me soon. 'A man may have many wives but he can only have one mother.' Evan re. his mother said, and I agreed with him, that 'mothers were the only people who really cared if one went away, wives and friends pretend to care but are easily comforted.'

Give my best love to Madeline and Pamela and thank them very much for their letters. I have read all their letters to Papa. I love you.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

68

To his Mother

CATERHAM,

August 27th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Have just got your letter. Be very careful not to talk about my soldiering or anything at Schwalbach if possible, as the people there have nothing to do but gossip. Madras was a secret plan of mine, it has not succeeded as R. Bourke won't be bothered with

me. I *always* know what I want to do in my profession and hate discussing it with anybody but Harry Legge. I never dreamt of making Madras a serious thing in itself, would not have accepted a paid A.D.C. ship, but wanted very much to be taken *unpaid* and free to Madras as all the reinforcements for Burma leave there in November, and with Pole-Carew's influence and my own luck I was nearly sure to get on, only of course I did not say this to anyone as it would have spoilt my chance. I regret not going as the Iriwady, and Mandalay would be so interesting now before they are spoilt by being Europeanised. Darling Mamma, I don't think keeping 'quiet'! ever helped anybody. I will dine with you on the 7th.

Best love to Mad. and Pam. I love you very much.—
Your most loving son, GEORGE.

69

To his Mother

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
WINDSOR, September 10th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am *so sorry* and disappointed at not seeing you—I gave Caswell a telegram this morn to housemaid to ask when you were expected and he told me you arrived yesterday and leave to-day for Petworth, so I do not know when I shall see you.

I was relieved at Caterham on Tuesday night, so I did the work Wednesday morn, caught the 11.30 train, changed at Waterloo junction and arrived here to take on Codrington's work. I have been very busy ever since, the Battalion settling down into new quarters, two court martials to make out and fitting the winter trousers. I begin to feel as if a holiday would be nice and shall enjoy going to Escrick¹ on Monday though I should much prefer joining you all at Petworth. It was very dear of Madeline being disappointed when she thought I was

¹ Lord Wenlock's place in Yorkshire.

going to Madras, her coming out was the only thing that made me feel uncomfortable about going—now that Fate has interfered we will make the best of it and sit down to enjoy the months of January, February and March—87 which we hope to pass together, as I know I shall whisk off soon and would like to have a real home at ‘Clouds’ to look back on. Except four Sundays I have done five hours’ soldiering, at least, a day since the 27th July, including all sorts of work down to setting and marking examination papers on Drill to all the Corporals at Caterham so that I feel rather like a sergeant myself. Give my love to Aunt Constance¹ and say how sorry I am not to be able to get away to-morrow, and best love to beloved Madeline and Pam—looking forward very much to hearing their adventures.—Most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—It is a very unpleasant day, but yesterday I enjoyed walking about Eton with Lambton who is very affable to me.—It will be six years in two months since I left Eton, and I really believe I have only been there *twice*!! since and have not been into many of the best known fields and places at all, so it all seemed so familiar and strange to me. I shall call on Mitchell, Warre and E. Lyttleton when they return. I shall stay here as much as possible till I go on leave on the 3rd of January.

Tell me your plans in your answer to this as I shall be so disappointed if you go to Scotland without seeing me.

70

To his Mother

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
WINDSOR, September 26th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I write to thank you for your letter. I liked it *very much*, although I do not think it would help anyone much to make up their minds!

But as you know, whether for better or for worse, I

¹ Lady Leconfield.

cannot help always making up my mind at once and then sticking to my opinion. I think very hard for a short time before I settle on any course, but having once settled on a course, or even having decided to let Fate settle a course for me, to that course I stick with all the obstinacy that you know. You know how keen and ridiculously serious I am about trifles ; I have never been able to do anything ' in fun ' that I can remember ; and least of all could I ever be ' in love ' ' for fun ' ! I send a ' Song ' I wrote about driving on an August evening, after a hot day, to Saighton. The last stanza has a faint ring of ' Herrick ' in it and has the further merit of being an answer to one of your questions, written four weeks before it was asked !

SONG

Across the shadows of dark elms made golden
By shifting gleams of Sunlight from the West,
Where slowly sinks the Tyrant to his rest,
In far-off western waves, beyond the olden

Ranges of Welsh Hills, all purple and red,
Still shooting lingering darts in desultory ire,
Athwart the dusty road to dye with fire
And flame of August might each ruddy stead,

Hid almost from all eyes by thick-leaved trees,
Where weary oxen slowly seek their byre,
I speed along ; tho' all else living tire
With longing for the whispering of a breeze ;—

I speed along the powdery path and strain
My sight to catch the warm red sandstone wall
Hewn, ancient, from the rock, where if she love at all,
My Love will stand, and great joy shall I gain.—

Beyond all hope and dream of Loveliness
Wrought out in thought thro' hours of weary days
Of longing, pass'd in loving loneliness
She is—and in the East outshines the western blaze.

Beyond the peace of Avilon, or where
 In amber light Endymion reposes,
 Bathed in the lovelight of his Goddess fair
 Is the soft light and Peace amid her Roses :

Far, far, beyond all Joy that Orpheus' lute
 Bestowed, or Music e'er fond Sappho granted,
 Is the deep Joy and tingling Rapture mute,
 As drinks my Soul her silvery tones, enchanted.

If Joy and Delight
 Of Beauty and Splendour
 Of Form bless my sight
 And her sweet voice does render
 Such Peace to my Soul in this soft August even,
 If here amid Roses she lift me to Heaven !
 Shall I live, and not know that no chance can deter,
 Or prevent that my Life shall be lived but for Her ?

71

To his Sister, Mary

CASTLE GUARD,
 WINDSOR, October 3rd, '86.

MY DARLING CHANG,—I have been a very bad correspondent lately, and now I pay the penalty ; every fault has its necessary punishment ; the punishment for allowing a long time to pass by without writing is the difficulty of settling down to write. The oftener you write to anyone the more you have to say. When last I saw you I think I was at Caterham, (I stopped writing because from July 27th to September 13th I did nothing but 'soldier' all the time) and expecting to go to 'Enjoyable Injia' ; when that fell through I fell rather flat. On the 13th September I went to Escrick and had a real good 12 days' holiday, which I enjoyed, racing, tomfoolery and grouse-driving. About the 25th I came back here and have been on guard now 3 times since then, paying up my duty.

There are two ways of taking this guard : you can

either sit here with a novel that bores you, and all the comic papers, eat a big lunch and smoke too many cigars, finally falling asleep, to wake up rather cross with no appetite for dinner.—This way I think is a mistake as it entails all the weariness of a long journey without the amusement of the scenery and motion.—The other way is to go at once to the root of the matter and say ‘here I am quite alone for 10 hours, shut up in a turret chamber ;’ then ask ‘What is the most *suitable* life for a person in such a position ?’ Answer : ‘The life of a literary recluse, or hermit, eating sparsely to avoid the discomfort of repletion, and since he cannot exercise his body, exercising his mind in reading and enjoying the associations of the place.’

Don’t you agree with me that, setting Happiness aside as an unattainable mark for every-day archery, the best way to be comfortable and ‘enjoy life’ is to live in harmony with your surroundings, in the country to be a bumpkin, in London to live for society and enjoy art ; at a country house party to play the fool agreeably, and in a castle alone to be a hermit. To agree with me you must further allow that it is reasonable to live a short piece of life of a sort—say 10 hours—guided by the same rules as you would a long piece of the same sort, say 10 years.

My practical application of the theory above set forth is to try and teach myself Italian till 1.30, when I lunch off bread and cheese, lemon and soda and black coffee. After lunch (this is after lunch) relaxation, writing a few letters, reading poetry and smoking cigarettes till 3. Three to five, English history. 5 o’clock, anthem at St. George’s Chapel, visit the sentries, read poetry or novel and write letters to dinner time ; after dinner read papers (we go back to barracks to dine) and play whist. 11 p.m. visit the sentries and enjoy the associations, castle by moonlight, etc., winding up by reading favourite books in bed till too sleepy to understand them.

I give the programme, for I find that unless you make a programme and stick to it, you break all the rules, read

the papers in the morning and walk on the terrace instead of reading the history.

Write and tell me all that you are doing, and in particular whether you are going to Wilton¹ on November 22nd. I do hope so, as I am. But *if* you are going in December, let me know and I will try and wriggle out of my engagement and get asked then; I think I might manage this as I was originally given a choice of weeks. You made Papa perfectly happy at Stanway, he still beams when he talks of it and says that there he felt quite like a young man.

Give my love to Lady Wemyss, if you *are* at Gosford, and write soon, and then I hope with luck that we may pick up the threads and write about once in three weeks to each other as before.—Your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

72

To his Mother

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
WINDSOR, October 18th, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I got your letter to-day, it was a great joy. I also got two of the most wonderful letters anybody has ever got, from S. I get about ten or twelve sheets a day from S., written at all times at night, morn and afternoon and posted at any time, so they vary, and show all her thoughts sometimes quite weary and desponding and then in the same letter joyous and hopeful. She tells me that she cannot write to you in all this uncertainty but that you must not think her cold and that I am to send you her love and tell you that she loves me!—

I liked Madeline's letter very much and am very interested in her movements. I think that this bit of my life will always be interesting and odd as a recollection.

It is almost dark when I get up at 6 o'clock then I breakfast and do orders at 7.30 and get S.'s first letter, drill the battalion to 9 o'clock, commanding officer's orders to 10, and S.'s second letter, business to 11.30,

¹ Lord Pembroke's place near Salisbury.

hard exercise to 1 o'clock very light lunch, write S., walk or play lawn tennis singles with Tollet in a covered court and get to my room by 4.30, then read hard and learn Italian till quarter to eight, dine and play whist to 10.30, write to S. and read till 1 or 2 every day. I feel quite stupid from it, but it is better than taking to drink or being foolish. Best love to all.—Your very loving son,
 GEORGE.

73

To his Father

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
 WINDSOR, November 4th, '86.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—*Many* thanks for your letter. I am trying to be 'asy'—I have Vandyck and Solymán here as well as Codrington's mare; I exercise them every day in the Park.

General 'Charlie' Baring came down, dined, slept and inspected us and was very pleased with himself and us. And goes about saying how much he enjoyed it and 'd—d smart battalion.'

A most curious thing happened the other day. Folsom came up to me and said 'Look at the detail card for to-day.' I took a card *exactly* like our detail cards in size and in the writing on it, but blistered by damp and with spots of rust on it. I thought someone had done it on purpose, but looking closely, read 'Detail of the Castle Guard, 1st Guards, 3rd January 1798!' He had just found it behind the grate in the Quartermaster's store-room where it has lain for 88 years.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

74

Extract from a letter to his Sister, Mary

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
 WINDSOR, December 12th, 1886.

I had a good laugh in church this morn; the excellent man in the box pounding away at 'It is appointed that once a man shall die.'

I was smiling at recollection of the man who said 'That 's the worst of it, if I might do it twice I shouldn't care so much,' when he fairly startled me by saying—'It is not shuffling off this mortal coil, as some!! shallow!! person (person!! Ye gods) has *somewhat* irreverently called it.'!!!—

Whatever 'dreams' may have come to the Immortal W. since he 'shuffled' must have been rather disturbed.

75

To his Mother

(CASTLE GUARD),
Midnight.

VICTORIA BARRACKS,
WINDSOR, December 13th, 1886.

DARLING MAMMA,—Your letter was very delightful, and is I think the signal of victory. I have been very triumphantly happy to-day, alone in my Castle, I send one song of triumph, written after reading your letter. In it remembering the Sunrise at Gibraltar, as the most lovely thing I have seen, and mix it up with the happiest moment of life, winning the most lovely living thing. Since dinner I have written another wild 'whoop' of triumph—which I reserve as I think it probably gives me more pleasure now than it will and I doubt if it ever would please anyone else. Only I had to have a shout and as I have been alone all day I wrote my shout.

Remember it is quite private, I have another happier letter from S. a delightful one, but in it she begs that we do not speak of it as we are not going to marry till February. She has told Princess of Wales who was very kind to her.

Io Triumphe ! Ewe ! (these are Greek shouts of triumph) it is past one o'clock but—I am very wide awake and qualifying for Bedlam.

Best love to all.—Your loving Son,

GEORGE.

MARRIAGE WITH S. S. COMPARED TO SUNRISE
AT GIBRALTAR

My Soul bows as the Sea, in long tremulous waves
That are bathed in the glory and Joy of the morn ;
Where each glides to the East and with rosy light craves
To be decked and forget the wild ocean forlorn
Of all joy, swelling still in the West and enhancing
The peace lying lock'd within rock gates of gold ;
And one cloud is a crown in all beauty descending,
Iridescent with hues giving rapture untold,
On the bright Lord of Light, rising up and entrancing
The sea and each land with delight never ending :
With delight never ending, but quiv'ring and leaping,
From hill top to hill, beyond lofty Gibraltar,
Where the mists now awake, that the night had left sleeping,
To arise, as the incense wreathes up from an altar,
And veil the white Sierra Nevada now flushed
With soft rosy light on each crest beyond crest,
Like pillars of marble in some mighty Fane,
Reared by Titans of old in the uttermost West,
Blushing red when all sound but the priest's hymn is hush'd,
As the sacred flame kindles and leaps up amain.
As the sea that escapes from the storm and the wind
That have lashed the Atlantic in darkness and gloom,
By the scarred cliffs of Ceuta no longer confined
Ripples on in light laughter and joy that the doom
Of the Storm God frustrated no longer may mar
The Rapture of greeting the Light, and the splendour
Of Dawn on the Earth and its beauty in Heaven ;
So my Soul in its ecstasy pæans shall render,
When it greets her white soul so long worshipp'd afar
In its temple snow-white as the snows that are driven.

76

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, Christmas Eve, 1886.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—A merry Xmas and a happy
New Year to you all ! Here I am *very, very happy*,

except that poor Sibell coughs a great deal. It is I am sure a cough sympathetic to that of the children, such as you all had after Guy and I were ill at Hoddesden. I do hope you will have written by now, as it is nearly a fortnight since I have heard from you. Sibell has masses and masses of letters about our engagement, one large sack still unanswered. They are most amusing as the utterly insignificant people whom she has spoilt complain of hearing it from outsiders, whilst her best friends are most kind. Darling Chang looked very beautiful at Hatfield, but so thin, you must give her a good scolding and make her fatter again. I hope to come to Clouds on New Year's Eve. Everybody is very kind to me. Codrington congratulated me warmly, saying he was delighted for my sake, but very sorry that I should now no longer aspire to the Adjutancy, saying it was 'a great loss to the Orderly Room' which from his point of view is the highest compliment he could pay.

Darling Mamma, I am much happier than you think, because besides being unspeakably happy at having won Sibell, I am happy about things in general, feeling strong and in earnest about life and the pursuits of which it consists and caring wonderfully little whether the value of their objects is apparent to me. Compare A. Dobbin's sonnet 'Don Quixote.'

Alas! poor Knight! Alas! poor soul possest!

Yet would to-day, when Courtesy grows chill,
And life's fine loyalties are turned to jest,

Some fire of thine might burn within us still!

Ah! would but one might lay his lance in rest,

And charge in earnest—were it but a mill.

Very best love to Papa, Mad., Pam., and Fraülein.—
Your very loving and exuberantly happy son,

GEORGE.

77

To his Mother

HALKYN CASTLE,¹

HOLYWELL, *February 10th, 1887.*

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA,—Above is representation of large bright room, with two fireplaces, two large and two small windows, in which we live and move—sit and eat—(There are other large rooms but we only use this one). Both fires blaze all day, and the room is bright with many flat blue bowls of white and red camelias and *sweet* with many pots of hyacinths and growing lilies-of-the-valley besides snowdrops and Christmas roses—Piano on which ‘Faust’ is played at *rare* intervals, select but much neglected volumes, Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, Heine, Esmond, Dante (translated), Sir Percival, Tennyson and ‘Modern Painters,’ and some of Sibell’s little miniatures and silver toys are in it to please. Outside it is frosty, but sun shines all day, and it is warm, and white walls are bright, and S. S. wears one teagown after another, each one softer and prettier than the last.

So much for the stage, the actors are both perfectly well and perfectly happy and in tearing spirits. It is delightful to be thoroughly spoilt by Fortune, we hunted our brains for something to be sorry about on Monday night, could only think of bouquet left behind and that arrived next morning at breakfast. There are more delights in life than I imagined. Our drive was perfect, we were not cold. The horses raced along, sun shining on their grey coats, the Out-rider beamed his smiles when we changed horses, the firs by the roadside were very green against most blue sky, and we did the 14 miles in one hour and twenty minutes. The time flies faster than I knew it could and Monday is hurrying towards us. Bendor and Lettice came over and spent four hours here, in boisterous spirits, ran all over the common and drove the donkey

¹ The marriage took place at Eaton Hall, Chester, the honeymoon at Halkyn Castle.

off its legs—begged to spend the night and implored me at least to drive them to the station; they are counting the days to their visit to Clouds. We go straight to Swindon on Monday and to Clouds by 2.30 train on Tuesday, the 15th.

It was a perfect wedding, so unlike what I feared would have to be submitted to, no crowd of smart and idle people, no false sentiment, no *train*, it was so artistically hitchless that driving through the little crowd of servants to the pealing of the bells I felt it must be an opera of some sort or stage play in which I played the rôle of the bridegroom who, having triumphed over all difficulties, is borne away at the end of the fifth Act to be happy for ever after—

Darling Mamma, must write nonsense, because am too happy to be bothered with sense any longer—enclosed drawing of room by S. S. who sends best love to all, and so do I. Good-bye, till Tuesday, darling Mamma.—Your very loving and perfectly happy son,

GEORGE.

78

To his Father

LUMLEY CASTLE,
Febr. 27th, '87.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We have arrived here at last, very comfortably. We had $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours in London, reached York at 12 midnight, leaving it at 9 next morning and reaching Chester-le-Street at 11.20. Lumley is a most interesting place. Owing to its owners in the past having lived elsewhere for many years since frequent executions in it, it has escaped all early Victorian restoration and the introduction of modern comforts. It has of course been modernised and spoilt, but so naïvely, in the time and taste of Queen Anne, that this really only makes it rather comfortable and amusing; square Queen Anne or Georgian windows, with sash frames put where the pointed lights were on 3 sides. The Castle is a quadrangle enclosing

a quiet courtyard, with a grass plot and 3 laburnums; the windows on to the court are Gothic, and on two sides opposite are gateways, with narrow towers on each side, and coats of arms above them, about 20, showing all the marriages with Percys, Maudres, etc., etc., down to the time of Henry VIII.

The clock in a belfry on the roof behind also looks like that time. At each corner of the castle is a strong square tower, built in 3 tiers, with octagonal machicolated turrets at each corner of each tower. The Barons' Hall into which you enter is a delightful room. The date of the whole building in its present form is 1389, when the Lord Lumley of the day obtained a patent from Richard II. to castellate his 'mannor House.' This he is represented in the act of receiving in an oil painting on wood over the mantelpiece. Round the walls high up are hung all his ancestors from Lyulphus down to his time, all imaginary and evidently painted in his time,—and very funny.

Upstairs the rooms open one into the other interminably, all stripped of every rag of tapestry, nothing but bare boards, and grimy ceilings with cracked designs and cornices; all the walls are hollow; the allowance of secret stairs and hiding-places is about 2 secret stairs and 3 hiding-places to each room; besides places where nuns, etc. were walled up and troopers slain, which are thrown in about the landing-places and corridors. It is a real ghost's paradise. One whole tower was a barrack; in it each of the 3 stories consists of one large barrack room, with arched cement ceiling, the top one acting as a guard-room to the State prison contrived in the roof. (This room well stained with blood of a victim.) One of the most interesting rooms is the whole 2nd story of the S.E. tower; James I. used it as a bedroom on a visit; it is quite bare, a very old paper hangs in strips from the wall and the sun shines lazily into it from a high window with steps to it, showing millions of motes, onto the rotten and worm-eaten floor. The ceiling has a lovely old design on it, but cracked right across and very black.

The basement consists of dungeons interminable, with the usual allowance of secret stairs; under the gate-house the floor is hollow, the cavity under it filled with 16 feet of water; a secret stair leads from this room to Lady Scarbrough's bedroom, and it is very wonderful and a delightful picture, to think of her living quite alone, with a fat housekeeper and deaf butler and one maid, in a corner of this enormous stone warren, with the East wind blowing up secret traps into her bedroom and the rats letting down large stones with a bang over her head.

The Church of Chester-le-Street stands where a Church has stood for 1000 years; St. Cuthbert made it one of his temporary resting-places (the Wear of the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow flows by it and under the castle). All down one side is the aisle of tombs, 14 Lumleys, carved in stone, as Crusaders and Councillors, etc. 3 brought from Durham are very old and authentic, the others, Lyulphus, in particular, rest under the suspicion of having been RESTORED by King Richard's Lord Lumley, who seems to have had a great and almost Chinese reverence for his ancestors, and I think he holds out great hopes to

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the shade of the Sire de Brescey in the year 500.

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I arrive at Semley at 5.19 on Wednesday next. Tell Guy I shall hunt at East Stour on Thursday before returning to London if there is a horse, but not to stint himself of riding mine if he wants to because of this.

Have interviewed 'Bateman' the coachman. I do not think he knows much about hunters. The accommodation consists of 2 stalls; that being so, and as my horses have done very little this year, do you not think that if I can trust my man to exercise them thoroughly, it would perhaps be better to keep them up during the summer?

Saughton is looking lovely.

Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

79

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, February 28th, 1887.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—The sunshine here is wonderful, and the flowers wonderful, the sitting-room smells like a conservatory and the conservatory like heaven.

I send two little songs I wrote yesterday. Sibell sends her best love.

Love to all.—Most loving son,

GEORGE.

SAIGHTON SPRING SONG.

‘SALVE,’ S. S. S., FEBRUARY 1887.

An Island in a sea of grass,
An island of the blest,
Though far from famed Hesperides,
A northern home of rest,
A home where two may love the light
As birds within a nest;

Where perched upon our red-stone rock
Above each springing field,
Rolling away to Cambrian Hills,
No more by frost congealed,
But green and sun-lit, we may joy
In all the soft Spring’s yield.

Here hand in hand upon our plot
Pierced by the stronger blade
Of promised daffodils, we watch
Beneath our few trees’ shade
The crocus that from rainbow hues
So tenderly are made;—

And here the birds sing loud and long
Merrier than other where,
Waking right early in the morn
To free our hearts from care,
And loudly singing happy songs
In all our joy they share.

And here more violets love to grow,
And here their scent is sweeter,
And all the Hours pleasant are,
Nor are their footsteps fleeter,
For here they linger long in love
And joy they have to greet her ;

To greet the lady that I love,
The lady loved of all,
O'er her the trees their branches wave,
To her the sweet birds call,
On her the sunlight streams, for her
Joy throbs thro' great and small.

And all the Spring-tide welcomes her,
Here in our grass girt isle,
Waving green banners, trilling out
Glad notes to win her smile,
And marshalling flowers as body-guards,
Bright in their rank and file.

And every tree and leaf and flower,
Pranked with sun gold galore,
Their holiday blessings on her shower,
And winds with gentle uproar
Sing thro' the pines, and the birds from each bower
Sing ' Welcome for evermore.'

SONG OF THE 'LITTLE GREY GOWN'

I must sing of a little grey gown,
For in it the lady I love
Is more lovely, and sure she'll not frown
To hear that her beauty can move
Me more in that gown than another
Of silk or of satin and more in the fashion,
For I love with most passion
When she wears that little grey gown.

It is loose and it is soft and a-down
All the front are soft folds of pure white,
This is muslin I'm told, but as down
Of thistles 'tis soft ; to the sight

It is pleasant and marguerites crown,
 That on it appear my delight;
 For 'tis grey and 'tis simple and soft and most pretty
 And so is my Lady and hence this small ditty,
 To sing of her beauty so bright
 When in this little gown she is dight,
 In this little grey gown.

80

To his Mother

BRITISH EMBASSY,
 ROME, March 12th, 1887.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—We arrived here safely this morning, had some tea and both went to bed. Poor Sibell has had a headache, but is now better and is going to dine downstairs.

I now wish that I had found time to write before, as I would then have 'begun at the beginning' and told you day by day all that has happened this most delightful week; as it is, the 'present' is so engrossing that I must begin where I am, like an Epic Poem, and then work up to it.

The 'present' consists not so much of the Embassy or Sir John Lumley who is most kind and very interesting, but of the garden and its position. I walked into the garden along one of the two avenues of ilex, of any age, with enormous twisted boughs, some growing along with off-shoots like trees springing out of them, as thickly leaved and dark as the yew avenue we rode to from Wilbury, and rustling and trilling with birds. At the end are tall pines and grass, pied with daisies and little marigolds, left to grow long, and a little fountain, with a seat by it under a *lignum vitæ*—this so retired, except for the sound of mule-bells and Italian voices, that it reminds one of the pleasure-ground at Petworth.

But the position of the garden is the best of all, and makes it the crowning delight of the week, for it is bounded on one side by the wall of Marcus Aurelius, in the old flat red bricks with the flanking towers, old embrasures

and all—You can walk along the ‘covered way,’ now only covered with roses, along which the Roman Prætorians tramped and from which the Romans have shot their bolts in so many ages against so many nations; and always in vain! This garden, belonging recently to the Torbonias, was part of the Prætorian Camp, I am told; if so, the commanding officer had a most excellent bath! a bath excavated by Sir John three years ago and paved with the second best piece of tessellated pavement ever discovered, almost perfect, fourteen yards by eleven—With Tritons driven by Cupids, and sea-bulls, sea-horses and a sea-stag, the only one known, besides ordinary snakes and a sole, the big ones sixteen feet long. Our windows are opposite the ‘Porta Pia’ built by Pius IV. and the tower restored the other day, after being struck by lightning.

March 13th.

Darling Mamma, it seems impossible to find time to write, I have now just 20 minutes before dressing for dinner. It is no use writing about Rome, I am giddy from the last two days, it is like a bubbling and pricking drink from an urn handed to a wanderer in the desert, one can only blink at it all and not gasp out a description of the contents. Yesterday Sibell stayed in bed. Sir John drove me to the Coliseum, it was much more than I expected. Looking across its extent and up to the jack-daws wheeling against the sky over the highest part seemed almost a vicious excitement, and left me dissipated as if I had assisted at the old spectacles. Then to S. John Lateran, the floor and the disks of porphyry beyond imagination, then to S. Maria Maggiore, the two solemn lines of pillars, wonderful. To-day we drove all three past the Forum over the Tiber (Sibell thought of you when we saw Temple of Vesta) to the Porta Portuensis where Sir John has a private excavation near the Monte Testaccio (made of broken earthenware). There we found the workmen playing at ‘flashing fingers’ as they did a thousand years ago, and then washed with a watering

pot and scrubbing brush the marble head of an emperor just unearthed amidst the wildest enthusiasm on the part of the Clerk of the Works who found the expression of his imperial face 'molto simpatico' (as indeed it was but chiefly as I think owing to the absence of the tip of his nose giving him a cheerful and careless air) and of the liveried footman who harangued me in Italian and appeared to be congratulating us all on our good luck.

After that we drove to St. Peter's and home through the Borghese gardens, the little turf and cut box tournament ground almost as delightful as anything I saw all day.

To-night we go to a reception chez the Princess Baldoni (I think).—

Now as to our journey here, I must scribble it as I see no prospect of any time for writing. We started Saturday, March 5th at 8 a.m., both rather feeble at the early rising, and rattled and jolted in the old L. C. & D. past the little flint churches with yellow lichened roofs and stacked hop-poles like the camp of a Danish host in the fog, rearisen from the vaults of the little Kentish churches.

On the boat we found Lady Mabel and Kenyon Slaney a newly married couple and Lord Cork as odd man out, he was most kind and agreeable to both the brides. Lovely day in France. Sibell and I enjoyed Normandy very much particularly church at Abbeville, and poplars growing out of grass fields, round old red brick turreted Manor Farms, all bending gracefully one way, and green from the green like rushes growing out of a pond.

We only had three quarters of an hour in Paris and got no dinner, so had Café au lait and supped at Dijon off bread and best half bottle of Burgundy ever drunk—sharp frost at Lyons, Avignon 'mystic wonderful' in the fog—and Tarascon, now sought out for the sake of 'Tartarin' and so Saracenic & Provençal. So on past Arles; Sibell and I both revelling in it, I think I must have lived one of my former lives on the shores of the Mediterranean possibly as a Troubadour lover of Sibell, then the daughter of a Provençal Count, for we both got quite excited at

the first row of cypresses and hailed the ilex and olives with delight, even the cane fences and eternal mulberry trees gave great pleasure. The valley from Toulon to Hyères, with the little castle on a sugar-loaf hill, was lit by a blazing sun all bright and hot except the strips of young corn coming out of the red earth under the grey olives with clusters of purple anemones amongst it.

Uncle Charlie ¹ met us at the station, they did fête us at La Luquette and were too delightful, worshipping Sibell. I cannot tell you how much I liked seeing dear Aunt Emily again, looking so well and young and talking so nicely and being so interesting.

Darling Mamma, I will send you this letter now, as it begins to look rather long. Love to all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—12 Midnight. Have just come back from Princess Baldini's so will write a *P.S.* At Hyères we may have done those things which we ought not to have done (I did for one, failing to overcome an irresistible impulse to climb the pine near the drawbridge at Château St. Pierre and being discovered when the door opened half way up it), but I am sure we left nothing undone that we ought to have done. First we had a tea at La Luquette of the Carltons and Miss E. Baker. Aunt Mary really better. On Monday we started at 1 p.m., called on the Carltons, then on the Léautauds. They were most kind. Madame is stouter but improved in looks. Monsieur was most affectionate, saying to me 'dear Georges, I am so pleased to see you' and to Sibell, 'This, dear Georges, I am so pleased to see him.' He then armed Sibell round the garden presenting her with a haystack of mimosa and sent up to La Luquette the largest bouquet of violets you ever saw. We then went to Silvabelle, quite unchanged, saw Guy's well, and the 'grottes,' and went over the house, the same mousy smell and the two little beds where Guy and I slept and acted in our bath-sheets, (I remember Chin's ² first report of us both being read there). The

¹ Major Ellis.

² The master of their private school.

trees have grown up but otherwise it might have been yesterday. We walked to St. Pierre (here I was discovered up the pine) then drove to Pomponiana round by the Pins Parasols and 'la plage,' to the town, into the church of St. Louis and so home! We also visited Miss E. Baker who said she felt as if she had known Sibell one hundred and fifty years. On Tuesday, next day, March 8th, we had a delightful journey to Cannes by the *slow train*, with all the windows (6) open, no faster than you drive and stopping at scores of little stations. Just puffing along the broad red valley with purple hills on each hand, through olives and pines, past little conical hills, cased in grey conical villages each crowned by a church with its iron-work belfry etched against the clear sky. We dined at 'Les Arcs' and so on. The sun set and all the gold became the very ghost of gold and the opal lights died and the moon rose, and we went so slow you could hear the frogs croaking the whole way. We pulled up and waited long at 'Le May.' I shall never forget the stillness, the purple zenith and light horizon with one dead aloe flower against it. The aloe that flowers and dies. I made this little rhyme about it inspired by the 'genius loci' to speak French :—

UN ALOÈS

Regardez cette fleur
Et plaignez son sort,
Dans l'heure de Bonheur
Atteinte par la Mort.

Elle a vidé son cœur
Pour être belle, elle a plu
Hélas ! je la pleur
Elle ne plaira plus.

Elle a versé son âme
Pour percer les cieux,
La Mort la réclame
Elle n'a pu dire qu'adieu !

And so slowly on, along the little bays with the moon pouring floods of light on the sea, just lapping the shore, past Théoul and St. Raphael to Cannes, where we took a final moonlight walk, supped and so to bed. Very sentimental.

81

To his Father

March 20th, '87.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Many thanks for your letter. I have written to Arthur Balfour to thank him. I do not know much about the 'Irish Secretary'; how much time has he to live in Ireland, and where are his secretaries? I have written one long letter to Mamma and find it very hard to secure a moment for writing, and Sibell is rather tired and not very well, so I prevent her writing as much as possible.

Our host is the gayest of the gay, and we with our heads full of the lovely sights we have seen and our unwilling stomachs of the 3 dinners we assist at each day, waited on by 4 liveried footmen, are whirled feebly protesting in his train to heated soirées, where we meet the same noble Romans night after night.

We had a lunch here the other day; it lasted, with coffee, etc. afterwards, from 1 to $\frac{1}{4}$ to 4 o'clock. The company, however, was interesting. Roseberys asked to meet Count and Countess Robilant. Robilant is the Minister of Foreign Affairs; being the King's birthday, he came in uniform, looking very splendid, almost picturesque. He is said to be an illegitimate brother of Victor Emmanuel, and looks the 'vieu militaire' all over, with his close-cropped, scanty white hair and Imperial, and the empty sleeve of an arm lost in fighting Austria pinned to his decorated breast. He is unpopular in their parliament, being too aristocratic, and for having an Austrian wife. He speaks badly, and once, when the Left called him an Austrian, waved his sleeve at them as his answer; but this sort of silent protest does not do here. Rosebery

asked why he was so unpopular, and when told that it was because he could not 'parlare,' said, 'Ah! I see they are beginning to understand "Constitutional government."' This was all interesting enough until all the secretaries and attachés here began talking shop *at* Rosebery to show how clever they were. Rosebery has since then had an audience of 3 hours with Robilant and also with the King, so you see he does not let the grass grow under his feet though he is out of office.

Randolph Churchill arrived here yesterday, having escaped from quarantine in Sicily in an open boat, leaving his luggage and servant on board ship. The officials here would have a fit if they knew it.

At Cannes we had a large dinner with the Bob Vyners and afterwards went in to the 'Duchesse de Luyne.' She was very charming and delighted to see Sibell. We met there a very pretty 'Marquise d'Hervey,' one of the prettiest French women I have ever seen. The young Duc de Luyne seems very nice, but over-crammed to get him into the Army. I like the Romans, they are very kind to us; the conversation at their receptions is like one of those games in which you have to speak or take a part on a given signal, such as 'grab'; a subject is started and animatedly discussed in very choice Italian; you are put 'au courant' in bad English, this is the signal and off you go in 'French of Stratford-atte-Bow.'

I hunted on Thursday and was much impressed by the horses, all very valuable. Don Giulio Grazioli, the master, is charming, but very English in appearance, like a good-looking and *very refined* Sir Claud de Crespigny. The turn out is not too smart or *more English* than at Home, but just that of a good provincial and sporting hunt. They *all* (about 25 or 30) jump, or try to jump, the posts and rails and ride quite as well as an English field. The only rather exaggerated item is the huntsman, who, I suppose as a protest against the geographical position of the country, drops more h's, 'my Lords' the master, and speaks with a more drawling twang than any stable-boy in England.

The weather the last 2 days has been delightful, and the wall in the garden a perfect place to imbibe all the associations of the Place. I wonder if we shall see as many pictures as you did; I fear not; and now the Borghese palace is shut owing to the death of a daughter. We saw the Sciarra palace the other day, usually shut, Rafael's 'Violin Player' and Perugino's 'S. Sebastian,' almost the best we have yet seen.

We went to Church at S. John Lateran this morn. The music splendid; and at Trinita de Monte this afternoon to hear the nuns' choir. The Farnese Garden on the Palatine, overlooking the Forum, is my favourite place, and the fountain on the Pincian, Sibell's.

Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

82

To his Sister, Mary

ENGLISH EMBASSY,
ROME, March 24th, '87.

MY DARLING OLD CHANG,—‘The first shall be last and the last shall be first,’ but all the same it is very wrong of me to write last to you who wrote first to me. Your first letter took many days in reaching me here. I wrote then to A. B.¹ thanking him, and again to-day to say I had abandoned my visit to Naples and intended to reach London directly after Easter. I do not see my way to getting back in time to be of any use before Easter, and think that by travelling slowly back via Perugia and Florence, I shall consult Sibell's comfort, and arrive at a time when perhaps A. B., the house being up, will have a few moments to spare in which to put me ‘au courant’ of the sort of work I shall have to do. It would help me much if you would write to the Poste Restante, Florence, just telling anything you may have gleaned as to the length of his stays in Ireland and the amount of time, if any, which I should have to spend there. I should be

¹ Arthur Balfour.

sorry to leave the Army and then find little to do, owing to Government going out, etc., but 'nothing venture, nothing have'; I am quite prepared to send in my papers and throw my lot into the Political boat, and so indulge harmlessly and legitimately such gambling proclivities as I may be cursed with.

Your letter was a rude awakening for which I am much obliged. I have been revelling in existence and steeping myself in all the associations legendary, historical, religious, artistic and picturesque of the 'Niobe of Nations.' All my day is a dream and at night my thoughts wander feverishly through ruined palaces and under grass-grown arches, down broken marble steps and across great open wastes of mouldering magnificence more confused and awful than the lofty labyrinths threaded by my feet all day. The churches are disappointing, the pictures are hard to find, but the Capitol, Forum and Palace of the Cæsars overhanging it, drag one back day after day and compel one to go in. The Palace of the Cæsars, or rather the Boccacio-like Farnese garden, grown over with weeds, reached after passing all the ruins of the palaces, and looking at all the views of Rome, ruined temples of antiquity, with now ancient Campanili of churches built in them sprouting up like lovely parasites, already beautiful in their own decay, framed by the 'loops of time' in the palace walls all growing with wild mignonette, is the most exacting in its loveliness and associations; here you may walk between cut hedges of arbutus, past statues in semicircular spaces, where lovely ladies and courtiers sat through summer days, to the dark grove of ilex crowning the cliff, honeycombed by passages for the secret ways of guilty emperors, that overlooks the Forum, all encumbered with grey remains, a great charnel house of dead religions and lost arts. Of lost Arts! you cannot imagine what the effect is on the mind of a sudden call to admire Beauties of which it has no knowledge, and the statues are that and more than that; if men could do this 2500 years ago and if they cannot do it now, and if they all did and the dignity of it is marred and wantonly

wrecked on all sides, how then can you *see* hope in the future, or care much for men's efforts now. But care one must for men's efforts; in fact, all experiences, pleasant and painful, seem to be only to force one to sympathise more and more with men of all times, and especially in as much as they worked. No Pope could have built his palace from the Coliseum if he had realised the genius of its architect, the toil and sweat of the workers, some sulky and some good-humoured, and all the swelling pride of its imperial creator; he could not have done it if he had felt for their feelings as men.

I enclose a sonnet.—Most loving brother,

GEORGE.

IN FARNESE GARDENS BY PALACE OF CÆSARS,
OVERLOOKING FORUM

(SONNET)

Here would I rest upon the Palatine,
Almost in darkness 'neath the ilex trees,
Where blackbirds sing, here would I take mine ease,
And never care to gaze o'er the confine
Of cliff down on the wrecks of days long syne
Strewn far below, prone pillar and fallen freize,
But feeling they are there I'd drink the breeze
That whispering all their beauty makes it mine;

It whispers of their beauty, of the toil
And hard-won joy of those who gave them form
And found them good, dim shadows of past years
But very men; their ghosts when Gothic storm
Threw down their pride and smothered it in soil
Shed in their hell, I doubt not, bitter tears.

March 19th, '87.

ROME

The riddle of the universe is here
More hardly guessed, the grim eternal Sphinx
Of wanton Fortune, peering through the chinks
In riven palaces, with chiller fear

Turns sick the heart of man, since everywhere
 Lie victims vainly shattered. Valour shrinks
 From all their beauty wrecked, whilst gluttled winks
 The beast who needs no cynic pause to hear ;

For who shall dare to answer when the mind,
 As some wild tribe before a higher race
 Must hopelessly abandon empty strife
 For nobler ends, and only seek to find
 Ingloriously some pleasure in their grace,
 Some truce perchance to weariness in Life.

March 22nd, '87.

‘ HERE LIES ONE WHOSE NAME WAS WRIT
 IN WATER ’

Here lies one and if his name was written
 In water 'tis the water of our tears,
 That flow for excellence untimely smitten,
 The very last of Greeks in meaner years ;
 And sterile sorrow vainly wailing sears
 More deep, and anguish may not well be borne
 For one who perished tortured by the jeers
 Of later Goths, whose very soul was torn
 On all the brutal thorns of ignorance and scorn.

And if he perished immature ; if Fortune
 Here won again a blood-stained victory
 Where all her victims piteously importune
 Some juster Gods to mould the destiny
 Of men ; if here where as beneath a sea
 Lie human art and efforts wrecked, where cries
 Call from the very stones for sympathy ;
 If here, 'mid Greece divine enslaved, he lies,
 How shall his cruel fate escape our memories ?

March 25th, 1887.

83

To his Mother

March 25th, 1887.

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA,—I am only writing a line
 to say Sibell is not quite well—having a sick headache,

it is very sad. So we stay here a day or two till she bucks up, and then go straight—I hope—on Monday to Perugia, Grand Hotel, and then in three or four days to Florence, arriving about the 3rd. I have only a moment more and am not much inclined to write. Have just visited the grave of Shelley's heart 'Cor Cordium.' I send one violet and one bay leaf from the tree by Keats' grave. It is the only cemetery I have ever liked, bounded by the old battered wall of Rome and dark from the thickest cypresses. I wrote these sitting by Keats' grave, for my own pleasure, because Shelley has done it for all others and all time and I send sonnet on sunset from the fountain on the Pincio, and sonnet on the ilex trees in the old Farnese garden by the Palace of the Cæsars that overhang the Forum.

Best love to all, will write to-morrow how Sibell is.—
Your most loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—Sibell has ordered large photographs to be sent to Papa.

PINCIO

A fountain splashing ever into the air
To touch the thick leaved boughs of ilex trees,
And many bells tolling everywhere
From darkling belfries borne upon the breeze;
The sky above the horizon orange is,
But mounting higher clearer opal hued,
The water in the basin with quick changes
Of liquid yellow marble is endued;
A line of pines and single ones stand out,
Just severed from the hills of porphyry red,
There is a distant hum of holiday rout
Below, and now one star shines overhead,
And there the great dome stands—beyond all range
Of sense, so dark yet infinitely strange.

84

To his Mother

ENGLISH EMBASSY,
ROME, March 29th, 1887.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I send you an elegy written by the grave of Shelley's heart.

Sibell is not very well, has sick headaches, so we had to wait here, and go to-morrow to Perugia. I have telegraphed to 'Poste Restante' Florence, to try and get 'important letter' but doubt if they ever give them up so easily.

If its purport is to bring me back, it does not much matter getting it a day or two late, as I am coming back as quickly as Sibell can travel. We shall only stay three or four days at Perugia, seven or eight at Florence and then break the journey in Switzerland and probably at Calais, as I think travelling at night upsets Sibell.

The picture Papa referred to in the Vatican is no longer on view there. Perugino's pictures give me more pleasure than anybody else's in the Vatican. I like his 'Resurrection' (soldiers sleeping, light horizon into which you can see for thirty miles, amber robed angel on small cloud on right, and green-robed angel on left).

Rafael's 'Virgin Crowned' (green angel and angels playing violins) and Perugino's 'Virgin and Four Saints' (sitting in a wooden chair under a wooden canopy), I like these three best, much better than 'Transfiguration' and 'Madonna' of Foligno. I have been to few galleries but think I know the pictures I have seen, I can count up and see clearly before me eighteen in the Vatican and two in the Sciarra that I like (Rafael's 'Violin Player' and Perugino's 'S. Sebastian'). The statues have surprised me most, I had never seen a good statue and they were a revelation. The statues and ancient remains and associations were more than I expected, the pictures what I expected, and the churches less than I expected. The churches, perhaps not less, but a disappointment to find they had all been restored in the last century.

I went to see the picture in S. Pietro in Montorio, it is wonderfully drawn, and what a splendid view you get from outside, the tops of the Apennines are white with snow, and the nearer hills purple, and lights of all colours thrown from the clouds passing over the Campagna. I saw another sunset from the Pincio on Sunday, even more wonderful than the first, a rosy light all round the horizon, a blaze of orange where the sun had sunk, changing through pale yellow to 'lurid blue' on each side, and a horn of light the colour of amethyst stretching right away up to the right into the sky, like a limb of the sun's corona in an eclipse, and the new moon above all. The hills behind which the sun has set do become the colour of porphyry, I looked at this to see if I had not exaggerated in the rhyme I sent you, but I had not, and the reflected light in the fountain basin is exactly the colour of the 'jacine antique.'

I have fallen in love with four of the Muses in the Vatican. My safety is that I admire 'Melpomene' for her figure and 'Euterpe' for her face, so I shall not elope with either. But the bust of Marcus Aurelius as a boy I would give worlds to steal, as a companion it would excel even his philosophy in reconciling one to the 'ills that flesh is heir to.' Sibell sends best love and so do I to all. Good-bye, darling mamma.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

ELEGY

Beneath the old and battered wall,
That failed to shield the grace and arts
Of ancient days, a violet pall
Spread chastely o'er the 'heart of hearts.'

The violets nod their sombre flowers
Beneath a dim lit cypress grove,
Thickset as spears of unseen powers
Who gently rest around in love ;

And pay devotion at the stone,
A simple marble lowly laid,

And leave not one to rest alone,
Whose essence of their own was made ;

Whose outward form ethereal
Belonged not to our mortal race,
But to his exquisite ideal
Of deathless spirits clothed in grace ;

His tender loveliness divine,
Transfused by all the airy light
Of genius, was the outward sign
Of inner joys for our delight.

The wild blue eyes, the wavy hair,
Set forth the fairy fantasies
He gave to us as gifts to share,
The bluer waves, the clearer skies,

The Titan and the tender plant,
The forest and the garden sweet,
The lady who tended each flower's want,
And the sound they loved of her gentle feet ;

The oceans, rivers, solitudes
Of woods and caverns hid from sight,
The scarred and frozen altitudes,
The realms of amethystine light.—

Here lies the heart that called to life
Such scenes as these ; as this ! It lies
In utter silence free from strife
Beneath the deep Italian skies ;

In utter silence save for sighing
Of breezes through the boughs above,
And of one bird whose soft replying
Echoes her newly chosen love ;

In shade where Spring dare hardly stir
But still preserves the solemn mien
Of Wintry woe, where sombre fir
And cypress temper all her sheen ;

Where Cestius dead is fain to lie
Beneath a time-worn monument,
And so recall Antiquity
To join with us in sad lament ;

Where crumbling walls, that stood in vain,
Take graceful shapes in their decay,
Decay that adds not to our pain,—
His gift can never die away.

His art will live without a shield,
Enshrined in all human thought ;
His images can never yield
Their grace, to rude destruction brought ;

But in bright contrast to this spot,
And to all human destiny,
His genius shall redeem our lot,
And live to all Eternity.

CAMPO SANTO,
ROME, *March 27th*, 1887.

85

To his Sister, Madeline

GRAND HOTEL,
PERUGIA, *March 31st*, 1887.

MY MOST BELOVED MADELINE,—I wish you many, many happy returns of this day and the best of all luck through life. I wonder if you have been going out much and whether ‘a month ago’ crowded with new people seems as far off to you, as with new places, it does to me. We left Rome yesterday, after a final gallop through the Vatican, (a cherub in a picture by Correggio is very like ‘Ego Charts’)¹ and I felt quite homesick, until the new views captivated my fickle heart. It was the most lovely Spring day, without a cloud in the sky ; all the bushes on the banks of the Tiber to our left bursting into green, right across the Campagna to the Sabine hills, past Narni

¹ Hugo Charteris.

and an old Roman bridge with two piles thrown down and the water rushing round them and one arch leaping still into space, and across a rich valley between the hills to Ferni, where we began to climb slowly up a ravine, with a small mountain stream rushing down it now on our right, now our left, and, when the hills nearly met, apparently burrowing under the permanent way; poor little stream once monarch of all it surveyed, in such a wild gorge, except of the Robbers who I suppose lived in the ruined towers on the highest peaks over our heads, and of the miller, long since dead, who made it help him to grind their stolen corn in a mill like Doré's illustration in 'Don Quixote.'

Through a long tunnel and then we whizzed down the other slope of the mountains, past small olive-yards reclaimed from the waste of shrubs and limestone crags, and through scattered oak trees, down into the wide green vale of Umbria, to Spoleto, an old, grey, conical, walled city, with Gothic churches and a citadel built by Theodoric, and memories of sieges by Hannibal, Goths, Lombards and others 'ad infinitum'; to Assisi, sitting on the side of a high hill, with streaks of snow on its purple crown, with churches rising from all points within it, some, or rather one, on the site where St. Francis was born, another where he was buried, where he preached, where St. Clara lived, till all the town only refers to him. We stopped at Bastia, and were much interested in a band and flag-bearers who got into our train, with all Bastia (10 men, 15 women and 30 children) looking on and deeply impressed. At Perugia it transpired that all this pomp (8 instruments and 3 flags, 2 flags were left behind, the public purse of Bastia being insufficient to supply more than 11 3rd class fares) was for the obsequies of some illustrious dead. All the flies of Perugia were waiting to join the procession (there are 5 flies) and our landau that we had ordered was loudly claimed by the Master of the Ceremonies, who was thoroughly enjoying his importance, his fat head and too small hat, worn by unromantic Italians, wreathed in smiles, black tie, gloves,

frock coat, trousers, and a large pair of butcher boots and SPURS, for the sake of dignity, a cigar and 'cravache' in either hand for elegance.

We slowly worked our way up the zigzag road to the town that crowns the highest hill rising from the valley, and at each corner the view became more wonderful. Our hotel is on the site of the citadel, from the South window of our bedroom you look almost over a precipice, broken by a few roofs one below the other like steps, to the wall, and across a wide valley of young cornfields and olive-yards with houses dotted here and there and lesser hills rising and deepening the colours with their shadows, to the high hills that stand in four ranges one behind the other; from our east window we look across 12 miles of the vale of Umbria straight at Assisi, and on to Foligno and Spoleto 40 miles away, above them blue hills and beyond the snow-topped peaks of the Apennines. But the view is too much, it is a panorama so great that it is impossible to take it in. When the sun set the effects of shade were beyond belief; some valleys near for 6 or 7 miles in shadow, and then another beyond lit with crimson light; the one blinding blaze of gold, and the farthest hills to the South shadowy as if *behind* the rays of the sun that shot level across between them and Perugia, gilding the hills that threw dark shadows for 20 miles. The last flare of crimson illumined our town, throwing clear-cut shadows and then leaping the whole valley, only touched the earth again to blazen Assisi and its hill 'all gules.' This light went and all the earth seemed dark, but in the EAST the Apennines and the white clouds above them kept the red light prisoner, reflecting it back on each other, almost till the West itself was dark, like two beacons in a giant land.

The drawing is the North Gate, built in time of Augustus after Perugia was destroyed in his war with Antony and the 'Via Vecchia.'

Best love to all, and especially to yourself. Good-bye, darling Madeline.—Your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

86

To his Mother

HOTEL MINERVA,
FLORENCE, April 8th, 1887.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Sibell is much better and has been seeing some of the pictures. I go first to explore and study for hours and then just take Sibell and show her nine or ten pictures. Assisi was absolutely unspoilt, so you may imagine what it was. The street, paved, with a gutter down the middle, runs up the hill in a graceful curve past three or four deserted ‘palazzas’ and continuous humbler houses between them, untouched except that succeeding generations seem never to have been satisfied with the position of their fore-father’s doors and windows, but always to have built them up and knocked others out elsewhere, so that the street is like a built up cloister of pointed arches with doors and windows in it irrespective of the pillars ;—and past a perfect Roman temple, and two or three open logias with frescoes in them, and coats of arms everywhere, here and there all along. It is like a city of the dead, we scarcely saw ten men in it and no horses, the rough paved street that *would* make such a noise if ridden or driven over, helps to realize the silence. The Giotto’s in the Convent Church are quite lovely and so is the fresco portrait of Santa Clara by Simone Memmi. Perugino is the painter that I love ; I think it is only given to me to sympathise with the work, whether poetry or painting or building, of a few, or at any rate that it is easier to see all the excellence of these few. I liked two of his pictures at the Vatican best of all and at Perugia I revelled in him. The ‘Cambio’ a room decorated by him, altogether, is perfectly decorated. Five frescoes, one in each archway, above a line of black-oak seats inlaid with lighter coloured woods, in each of the first two arches are six figures, three and three, with Prudence over the first three ‘philosophers’ ; Justice over the next, ‘kings’ with Numa Pompilius and Solomon ; in the next arch ‘Fortitude’ over Scipio, Leonidas and

Horatius Cocles, *they are splendid, really splendid* for they glow and shine, Leonidas in amber gold and Cocles in blue silver breastplates. (I have tried to draw Leonidas, in case you still want a knight for your book.) Temperance over the next three, Emperor Trajan and two others. The next arch a 'pieta,' and the fourth a Nativity, the fifth 'prophets and sibyls.' The 6th occupied by the high carved oak daïs. In the ceiling the arches are painted with arabesques, and meet in seven medallions, beautiful decorative representations of the seven planets of the Ancients, each a figure driving a chariot through the air, Apollo for the Sun, Diana for the Moon, Saturn drawn by ill-omened dragons, Jupiter, Mars with war horses and armour and dark red cloak, Venus and Mercury. Here—(Florence)—I think the Frescoe by Perugino, again, in the Chapter house of St. Maddalena de' Pazzi is lovely, even the crucifixion itself is not painful in it, and the Virgin in her sorrow so graceful and dignified, the light horizon he puts in all his pictures, so light and lovely. I never saw it in nature till I had lived at Perugia high up with a view extending for 40 miles every way, and the soft Elysian fields, and dreamy hills with gentle slopes and contours, and the frail trees against the light, like spirits of trees.

In the 'Accademia delle Belle Arti' he has a crucifixion with a Virgin, an elaboration of the one in the fresco. I never saw a figure in a painting that affected me more, or disclosed so fully the lovely thoughts and knowledge of its maker, but it does not make you think of the painter, but with him, you see a perfect image of sorrow, that is lovely, without a trace of vulgar contortion, or outward agony, her face almost turned to stone is beautiful with the lines of past love and happiness, and her graceful body has forgotten to be affected by grief, but it stands gracefully and unconsciously, whilst in her eyes you see that she is thinking of the past, of when her son was a little boy, and she had high hopes of him, so that there is a last lingering of joy under the stony face placed against the last light left by the clouds closing round, but that light

is the light of the infinite distance, past little sunlit hills on the horizon.

But do not think from this that I cannot enjoy Rafael, for I can. The Angelicos are lovely and Botticelli (Virgin Crowned !) and all of them. I am drunk from it, I go every day every spare moment, even if it is only for ten minutes to look at them again, and I do not know how I shall recover from losing them.

Love to all,—Your most loving,

GEORGE.

‘THE VIRGIN MOTHER AT THE FOOT OF THE
CRUCIFIX’

BY PERUGINO, No. 156, ACCADEMIA DELLE BELLI ARTI, FLORENCE

Ah ! graceful Lady, sorrowing
With thy face in stern repose
Weary of grief, with eyes failing
To weep ; conquering the throes
Of anguish, or a queenly captive
To Sorrow disdaining to bewail ;
Thy fair attitude marred by no restive
Sign of thy sore travail,
Sore travail to see thy Son die.

But contrasted in unconscious grace
To the stony sorrow, that makes dull
But cannot obliterate from thy face
The trace of past joys and the full
Delight and triumph of the days,
The early days, when He waxed strong,
Was lost and was found ; thy mind strays,
Wandering past pleasures among,
Till clasped fingers alone show thy agony ;

The agony that has passed from thy brow,
And dared never to touch thy fair form,
Lovely as a land when winds blow
Fiercely, that is missed by the storm :

On thy face against the light sky
 Low down and by clouds overcast,
 The sun of thy Joy, e'er it die
 With the sunlight, there too lingers last,
 To arise in Eternity.

FLORENCE, *April 7th*, 1887.

87

To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
April 15th, 1887.

MY MOST DARLING MAMMA,—This is only a line to tell you that S. S. and I arrived safely and comfortably last night. The twenty-four hours' journey and rough passage have completely revived Sibell, who is better, fresher and in higher spirits to-day than usual; it seems to suit her perfectly to undergo a long journey and at the end of it to find an east wind and falling snow, and it suits me perfectly to see her so well, and so all is very well with both of us. Upstairs I found the most princely present or rather magical treasure from Uncle Henry¹; I asked for any standard work, histories in particular, to start a library and found to-day a complete library of history, at least a *hundred volumes*!!! all beautifully bound, all the works of Burke, Macaulay, Prescott, Motley, Green's History, Merivale, Lord Mahon, Milman, Hallam, Freeman, etc., etc. I saw Arthur Balfour to-day, and shall see him again to-morrow. I hear that poor George Boyle (just left Coldstream) has died suddenly of rheumatic fever, I am *very sorry* at this.

I hope you will come back soon, as I long to see you.

Best love to all.—Your very loving son, GEORGE.

¹ Lord Leconfield.

CHAPTER IV

MAY 1887 TO JUNE 1889

Private Secretary to Mr. Arthur Balfour—Accepted as Conservative Candidate for Battersea—Birth of his Son—Ireland—France—Saighton and Ireland.

88

To his Father

IRISH OFFICE,

GT. QUEEN STREET, *June 8th, 1887.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I had an interview with the Chairman and Secretary at Battersea last night, and we arranged for me to make 6 general addresses to the 6 branches! And after that to have a large meeting in July. I had thought of taking a holiday to-morrow and going to Ascot, mainly to see Madeline in her glory and talk to Chang, but I have to make the first address to the 'Shaftesbury' branch in the evening, so I gave it up.

I am very much amused at getting a letter from 'Hall,' our old, tall, odd man, who played with us at Isel; he is treasurer to a habitation of the Primrose League in Battersea, and welcomed me with effusion, hoping I will fix a date for giving them an *address*!!

I have finished 'Life of Shelley' and feel quite dull in consequence. I am personally so fond of Shelley, and interested in his mind, that, no doubt, I had an amused curiosity, as in reading a letter about a person one knows, added to the pleasure that anyone, who cares for human nature, must find in this book. Still I think you will delight in it. The enthusiasm for the genius, beauty and social attractions of the people he meets and makes friends with, such as Emilia Viviani, and Byron, and the complete breakdown of all this and frantic efforts to escape

from their society, will amuse you very much. And you will be very interested in his power of seeing ghosts and the impressions which he himself made on others at a distance by telepathy. The last part of the book working up to the catastrophe is admirably written, as relentless and as thickly sown with warnings of approaching fate as a Greek tragedy.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

89

To his Sister, Mary

35 PARK LANE, W.,
August 20th, '87.

DARLING CHANG,—I go to Dublin to-night. This is only a line to enclose a sonnet called 'Ethics,' upon our conversation in the East room. I am not at all sure that the moral in it is either good or clear. It means that every man must stand bravely at the helm of his own ship if he bears an immortal soul for its cargo. This treasure is so great, that he must take the full responsibility of conducting it safely, just as any man must who is placed at a post of real responsibility, and trust only to his *nerve* and *judgment* when the storm breaks over him. If he has no such wealth in the hold, 'it really doesn't matter.'

This last minor chord, in the last 3 lines, might be misunderstood to mean that very likely he has none; but that is not the meaning; it is an attempt to paint artistically the impossible emptiness of contemplating such a possibility.

Bless you.—Your very loving

GEORGE.

ETHICS

(SONNET)

If it is true we bear a deathless prize
Through the world's waters, must we trim our gear
By antique rule, and ever humbly fear
And follow codes, which were but failing cries

Of men who died long since, no otherwise
 Than we shall die? Have we no leave to steer
 Our proper course untrammelled, right to veer,
 Or face the storm, borne foam-fed to the skies?

If such a prize we hold, all hope is ours;
 A coward is its owner if he craves
 A time-worn counsel when the tempest lowers!
 If this our wealth is not, the loud blast raves
 But cannot harm, bereft of all its powers,
 A wild wind wailing over wayless waves.

16th August 1887.

90

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, August 31st, 1887.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Thank you and everyone very much for letters on my birthday. We had a most festive day; it began before seven in the morning when we were awoken by the most hideous figure I ever saw—Bendor strapped into a perambulator in white petticoats with his face blacked with coal. (It had taken from 5.30 a.m. to complete that difficult process.) Everyone was in the best of spirits at breakfast; Sibell complained that her egg had got a little cold, and I said mine had got a little cough.

In the morning we had athletic sports, high jump, long jump, and the jump hand in hand over hedges, then swinging till luncheon. In the afternoon cricket, Lettice and I against Bendor, Cuckoo, Maudie Grosvenor and two of the Coachman's children. Then races, handicaps until dinner, after dinner we let off all the fireworks in Chester (there were seven rockets, some catherine wheels and crackers in Chester). After the fireworks the children went to swing again till half past ten o'clock.

Sibell gave me the 'Arundel Society' chromo-lithograph of Perugino's fresco in the refectory of 'Madelina de Pasci' at Florence.

I arrive by the last train on Friday next.—Your very
loving son, GEORGE.

AUGUST

A year ago I walked along this aisle
Of moss-green pillars and moss-paven floor,
Hearing the summer leaves unceasingly
Recall the sound of faint waves on a shore,
Low whispering, then for a little while
Swelling to raise a feeble thin uproar,
When streaming ever, but not restlessly,
They float upon the breeze, and slowly drifting
To soothing strains are ever aimlessly
Moving the wandering sun-rays, ever shifting
The oval-shapes of mottled twilight green,
That rise and fall upon the beech bark's silvery sheen.

A year ago leaving these stately trees,
I passed with thee beneath the burning rays
Of August noon-tide o'er the enamelled grass,
Then sought cool shelter 'neath the knotted maze
Of apple-boughs, where, reaching to our knees,
The green grass threw a soft, reflected haze
Of emerald through the intervening air,
That lay asleep, oppressed beneath the mass
Of heavy foliage green, and as the lair
Of some mer-maiden 'neath a sea of glass,
Was that hushed dell, with dreamy atmosphere,
As of Elysian fields, so sunless, still and clear.

A year ago I stooped to see thy face,
Shine from the azure of that crystal pond,
A year ago I gazed into thine eyes,
Halting where four trees made a shrine, and coned
Their sapphire wonder and the fragile grace
Of sunny tendrils in thy locks, than frond
Of bracken ferns more delicate a prize—
Of bracken ferns that branch between the blaze
Of golden blossomed gorse, that scattered lies
In Sundered islands by the grassy ways,
That lead to that low mount where cedars stand,
Fair as the Venus-hill of fabled Faëry land,

There by an oak tree lichened o'er I lay,
And gazed up at the glory that appeared
Of tender loveliness within the gold,
The wan gold halo of thine hair that neared
And intermingling with the argent ray
Of the (faded) wan silvery lichen, lent a weird
And shadowy fascination to the mould
Of perfect beauty, which thy features wear,
As though a Dryad's face by men of old
Were fashioned amid dædal plants that bear
Boughs wrought in gold and silver interwove,
A face that Gods might look upon and die for love.

A year ago!—That summer passed away,
And all its beauty passed—Alone I sought
The stations of my loving pilgrimage;
The beech trees with their glory brought to naught,
Stood silent with bare boughs against the grey
And sunless sky, and round their stems were caught
White choking mists; the apple trees by age
Seemed utterly undone; tortured with knots
Their twisted boughs seemed victims of the rage
Of some fierce flood, a matted mass that rots,
Debris of wreckage foundered in the fog;
And under-foot the long grass screened a sodden bog.

Blurred by a shroud of foul snow-rotted ice,
The crystal pond was as a sightless eye;
A shrine of four fair trees stood desolate,
Naked on every side, and misery
Held all the Faëry mount within a vice
Of bitter sunless woe, and wrung a cry
From out my frozen heart, loosing its weight
Of agony, as when the winter snow,
Piled up beyond endurance on a height,
Breaks in an avalanche, and from below
Loud angry roars of pain that's past despair,
Cursing the Heavens, foretell that Spring's return is near.

Then, had I sung Thee, I had wrought a wail,
Which might have swayed the withered hearts of men,
As moaning boughs before the North's wild wrath;
Such music were not fraught alone with pain,

But sobbing low how springtide cannot fail
 To follow would have soothed with that refrain—
 Now where the cedars bend towards the South,
 Protesting still against the winter's wind,
 It is an awful joy to kiss thy mouth!!
 But who shall sing when Winter lurks behind?
 Joy is too sacred for a poet's praise,
 And there is sadness in the wealth of Summer days.

G. W.

3rd & 4th Aug. 1887.

91

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, September 9th, 1887.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I have telegraphed to you that the 23rd or 24th will suit me. I now write to enclose Lord Lytton's letter. I should be grateful, if you have time, if you would drop me a line before then, to say what line and station I ought to go to to arrive at Knebworth.

I have manufactured 6 sonnets out of old odds and ends, and written 2 new ones in the course of yesterday and this morning.—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

92

To his Sister, Mary

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
 DUBLIN CASTLE, October 27th, 1887.

MY DARLING OLD 'CHANG,'—I have thought of you so often lately that I wonder why I have not written. The fact is my brain is addled with politics. It is intolerable that so many people should make so long speeches.

First of all I congratulate you on the 'name'—'Cynthia' is perfect; I like to have a niece called 'Cynthia.' It must be very gratifying to make anything nice enough to be called 'Cynthia.'

Sir John Lubbock, in a lecture the other day, said that wasps always made a boy or a girl wasp, whichever they wanted ; so they escape any anxiety or foolish mistakes ; but, on the other hand, they can never enjoy a delightful surprise and call it ' Cynthia.'

I am glad you like 'Legends after Exile.' I think the idea of 'Eternity' being slain, 'Time' the dead corpse of it, with its life-blood dropping in minutes, hours, and 'Hope' the Spirit of Eternity, is a wonderfully good one.

I should rather like one of you to write to Wilfrid, or Anne,¹ just to show you thought of them, and say that you heard from me that I hoped Anne had not been put to any inconvenience, or something like that. I cannot think of anything ; I am here for 7 hours a day or more, and spend the remainder of my time in reading the interminable speeches of Gladstone, Randolph, Chamberlain, Hartington, Goschen, Morley, Henry James, etc., etc. So I am bilious and stupid and expect to be worse to-morrow, as, for any sins of gluttony which I may have committed, I am condemned to-night to dine at 6 at 'Trinity College,' and sit to 11. Woe is me. Tell Fraülein that I read myself to sleep, every night, with 'Intermezzo' or 'Nocturnes' from her present to me, and delight in H. H. [Heinrich Heine].

Best love to 'Cynthia,' 'Ego,' and 'Bloody Guy,' and to old Guy and Pamela.—Your very loving brother,

GEORGE.

93

To his Mother

VICE REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN, October 28th, 1887.

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA,—I wish I could be with you in London. I think of you very much and shall to-morrow.

¹ Wilfrid Scawen Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt. The former had been sentenced to two months' imprisonment for speaking at a proscribed meeting in Ireland.

It is very sad for the children,¹ but for her, I agree with you, it is very well. It seems extraordinary that 'Life' which includes all our ideals of Beauty and Strength, happiness and devotion, should depend absolutely upon the state of nerves in a body that fails.

A body which obscures the life which we feel must be existing somehow *ideally*. I am *very* sorry for the children. It will be a great thing for Dorothy having you to comfort her and Mad. and Pam. as companions.

I was very puzzled to know what to do about Wilfrid, however, I thought, on the whole, that it was better not to write to him.

I think two months is far too heavy a sentence. It will probably be reduced on appeal. Meanwhile I suppose he will go about attacking the Government.

The Park here is very beautiful, and the colours of the trees wonderful. Burning beeches, amber elms, and pale green mourning willows.

I listened to the storm on Wednesday night, the 'west wind' howling and hurling himself against the house in a mass, and then retreating, whilst lesser eddies blustered and worried about my window—I could hear the leaves shuddering and being torn from their homes in the darkness.

Autumn is as wonderful as Spring, I always think of Rossetti's sonnet when I hear the leaves whirling on the ground—

'Ah Love, my love, should I no longer see—
Thy face on earth nor any shadow of thee—
Nor find thine eyes again in any Spring
How then should sound upon earth's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of perished leaves of Hope—
The wind of Death's imperishable wing.'

They are as beautiful as any in any language.

Amy Vitalleschi at Saughton the other day played some of Verdi's 'Otello,' I like the willow-song very much, 'Salce' in Italian sounds so sad, it comes on two notes

¹ His cousins, Guy and Dorothy Carleton. The letter alludes to the death of their mother.

'd' and then 'b.' And those notes, if you play them simply one after the other, are as sad as sorrow. Then it seems so extraordinary that one had not noticed that before. Now I hear them 'Salce, Salce' as dreary and hopeless as a curlew calling over a lake when the reeds are rustling after sunset.

Darling Mamma, I hope to get back to my S. S. in the middle of Monday night, it has seemed a very long parting.

I shall run to Birmingham on the 4th to support Arthur B. who speaks there.

I love you very much.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—It bothers me a great deal not writing to Wilfrid or Anne, could you write a line to her saying how sorry I am? I wish I could be with you on the 'worst day.'

94

To Charles Waldstein

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, November 6th (alas!) 1887.

MY DEAR WALDSTEIN,—How very good of you to remember me in connection with the 'Greek Play.' First let me thank you for that; (I have to approach you in so many keys of feeling, gratitude, regret and shame for not writing sooner, that I must get the most important one out first, i.e. my thanks to you, and Lady Grosvenor's, for the invitation).

Now for 'Regret.' First I regret very much that your visit to America was not quite satisfactory—you have my deep 'sympathy' (do you remember our argument at 2 in the morning on 'sympathy'?) in spite of my contention that we all live *alone*, I assure you that I can 'feel with' you in this matter, and hope with you too. You may draw a good omen from my hopes, as I am a lucky man.

It just occurs to me that an argument may have arisen, as arguments so often do, from the poverty of language. There ought to be three different words for the three

different ideas contained in 'to sympathise,' viz.: 'to regret with,' 'to feel with,' and 'to hope with.'

Secondly, I regret that it is 'maritally' impossible for me to leave my wife during the third week of November, and physically impossible for her to go to Cambridge.

And finally I am ashamed at my delay, but you will forgive me for not writing sooner when I tell you that I had to accompany Mr. Balfour to Birmingham, there to receive addresses, sit upon platforms and generally to fulfil the duties of a political aide-de-camp, and that I only got back last night.

I envy you, when you tell me that you are deep in work. Your work is so much more satisfactory than mine. I only came back from Ireland on Tuesday, where I have been sitting eight hours a day at the desk, and wading through reams of bad speeches before and after regular work. So October has been a blank as far as writing verses goes.

I wrote a good deal in September, amongst other things a sequence of 24 sonnets, which I hope perhaps that you will like. They came with a good rush, six of them in one day; so I still try to hope a little, but fear that I shall get nowhere riding these two circus horses, Politics and Poetry, round the narrow arena of my capacity.

I hope we may meet soon, and shall always be delighted to hear from you if you have time to drop me a line about 'any new thing.'—Yours most sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

95

To his Sister, Madeline

November 21st, 1887.

MY DARLING MADELINE,—I was delighted to get your letter, and sat down, a moment ago, to answer it with a glow of conscious virtue, thinking I had not put it off for long. It was, accordingly, a great shock to me to find, on looking at the day's paper for a date, that I got it more than a week ago! We have been having an

exasperating frost here; a gentle thaw all day and then, every night, a few degrees to drive it in a little deeper; so that, although it is now thawing and horribly dark and foggy, I hardly hope to hunt before Thursday. All my horses are sound and very fresh. But 'Pat' is not feeding very well, his liver being out of order, and indeed I am not surprised! and sympathising so cordially with him that mine is in a like manner affected. I am glad that 'Leopard' goes so ~~so~~¹ well and sensibly with the Hounds.

I have often been picturing to myself the success of Pamela at the P.L. meeting, and would have given anything to be there. On Monday I went up to London for the same sort of thing and made a 'social' speech at a 'smoking concert,' which I enclose. I never was so surprised in my life as at the loudness and length of the laughter, when I produced some very old story. The reception of one bad pun about 'Bach' and 'Offenbach' so astonished me that I nearly forgot to go on speaking.

Thank Papa for the report of his speech, I read it with great interest.

On Monday, December 12th, I have a meeting in Battersea of, I hope, 700 supporters.

Sibell and I have been landscape gardening, along the wall, and are both delighted with the result. We have cleared out the laurels, and turfed the ground over, leaving the lilacs, laburnums, chestnuts, etc., growing out of the grass. We have also made a little semi-circular grass-plot, with a laurel fence round it to hold a seat, and put two little box-tree sentinels in front.

This afternoon, however, we are very sad, as a wild rabbit, impelled, it is supposed, by hunger owing to the frost, has eaten our favourite shrub. A little one, about 6 inches high, which Sibell planted the other day, and to which she was much attached!

Sic transit! He is no more. And we are in despair as the motive of one of our principal walks is now destroyed.

¹ The second 'so' was a slip of the pen. I did not mean that he only went 'so so.'

‘I will add no more,’ as the Scotch minister said when he finished *reading* a sermon; and you may reply with the old woman at the back of the church, who liked extempore preaching, ‘Because ye canna.’

Very best love to all. And write to me again as I love getting your letters.—Your very loving

BROTHER GEORGE.

P.S.—Have just got Papa’s ‘Sevenoaks’ letter. I am so glad he will help me. Thank him very much. The meeting is Monday night, December 12th.

96

To his Sister, Mary

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, November 26th, 1887.

DARLING CHANG,—I am delighted with the lyric. It is very wrong of me to write about it now, as I have hunted all day and am besotted by the wind. Yet I cannot resist, and you must hold Boreas responsible for my brutishness. Well, in the first place, I must thank you, as the ‘pome’ occupied my thoughts for 11 miles of solitary riding to the meet, and in the next place I must thank fortune for the ‘à-proposity’ of the post, as I had watched the Divine Dawn this morning.

I am too tired and stupid to write a short letter, or, indeed, to *write* at all, so I will just talk with the end of my pen; (I must warn you that I shall inflict some of my ‘Dawns’ upon you).

(Here I begin to talk.)

I would give anything to be able to express myself so simply and to write with your really masterful *reticence* and power of nailing an idea and exhibiting it, instead of rambling on and on through bogs of description and metaphor.

Now for verbal criticism, which, mind you, is worth *nothing*, because the word the author selects is the best in 99 cases out of 100.

1. In the first line, apart from the first of the second stanza, I should personally like 'pale-faced' better than 'pale, faint.' (1) Because you have 2 epithets to one thing close by, viz. 'chill, flutt'ring.'

It is rather impertinent of *me* to say this, as my own style is as turgid and florid as a swollen and bilious river with hampers of faded flowers jostling on its eddies. (2) Because 'pale-faced' strikes a sort of harmony with the wistful hearts' who have watched the dying. (3) Because your poem depends a great deal upon the iteration of 'Dawn of Day' at the end, and a semi-iteration at the beginning balances and completes the cadence to my ear.

2. I prefer 'ashen' to 'silver.' 'Chill, flutt'ring wings' to me presupposes some ragged grey clouds like those which raced over the sky this morning. 'Flutt'ring' alone might indicate the rosy light leaping from height to height, but with 'chill' it conveys to me the sense I give above, and as the 'Dawn' here 'bears' \therefore *moves* and is altogether in a minor key, that is no doubt what you felt.

3. I think 'they' better grammar than 'those' in the last line but one.

I like the 'idea' very much, it is quite different to my idea of 'Dawn.' 'Dawn' has always struck me as 'tender and pure,' an emblem of a past golden age, or a foretelling of some future perfection, and altogether out of the run of ordinary grey misery.

But I like your idea in itself, and still more for the way in which you exhibit it.

Now to criticise it—by that I mean to say what *I*, who have not heard you explain it, understand by it, as it is written—(I am afraid, if you do not mean this, that you will think me very stupid for thinking it).

If you use the words 'bear away,' 'souls' and 'die,' you *implicitly* deny the doctrine of the immortality of the soul—by 'Bear away' you draw on the ordinary sort of person to expect the ordinary sort of thing, and then 'souls' that '*die*' comes as a shock to him. I think that very effective. The extinction of all existence at death

has always been a bitter pill, but you gild it very prettily. I am not laughing: *quite seriously*, as a 'lyric,' i.e. the expression of momentary feeling, I like the words as they are. *If*, however, you wish to tone that view down for yourself at any time, or to 'Bowdlerise' it for the public, I think you would have either to say 'lives,' which would spoil the whole thing, or else say 'men' instead of 'souls' in the 6th line; but that is much weaker.

As it is I read it:

1st Stanza:

'O pale, sad Dawn who takest away souls, that die after struggling.'

2nd Stanza:

'O sad Dawn, your peace and silence say to those who are left that the end of struggling is peace.'

You must not mind my construing the idea into common-place PROSE, the *proof* of an idea is that it remains when so travestied, and the proof that it is conveyed poetically lies in the amount of loss which it sustains in the process.

I think your idea is *good*, eminently suited to lyrical treatment, and that you have treated it successfully.

As an instance of some of the things I have written under the influence of 'Dawn' and to carry out my original threat, I append the following sonnet; it is the 18th out of a sequence of 24 which I wrote the other day.

How fresh it is! I bare my feet and feel
 The tender blades and cold dew calm my blood,
 Icing my swollen veins.—I think I could
 Dispense with all my life, if I might steal
 Each day from out my tomb, breaking the seal
 Of Death, to see the tenderness of *Dawn*
 Spread ever stainless to reproach and mourn
 Wrong's desecration in a mute appeal;
 Then die once more.—I think it is for this
 That men believe their sin shall be forgiven;
 We only *know* that Evil's progenies
 Are born for ever. This is a sign in Heaven
 That miracles are wrought, that Heaven's bliss
 May follow though men fail and right be riven.

This is a real case of 'poor Chang' ! I have inundated you with rubbish !

I like the 'pome' more and more.

The rhyme 'Dawn' and 'mourn' in my sonnet is atrocious, but the sense, if you think any abides in it, expresses as far as I am able, the feeling which I generally obtain from the 'Dawn.'

Good-night, Darling Mogs ; I am still in imminent danger of becoming a father.—Your very loving brother

GEORGE.

97

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 6th, 1887.

DARLING MAMMA,—Sibell is going on capitally.¹ She slept very well all night, feeds well and is very pleased with little Baby. I am writing by her bed, and she is cuddling the little steam-engine, who keeps puffing away and making comfortable noises. It has masses of black hair, eyebrows and eye-lashes. Blue eyes like Sibell's. It is very wide awake, looks about at everything and seems to enjoy life very much.

Thank Papa for his letter and tell him that I think the best way at the meeting will be that Fisher and I should speak to a resolution, and that he, after it is carried, should rise to move a vote of thanks to the Chairman and then make a speech on Fair Trade.

On Thursday last I had a good run on 'Pat,' forty minutes, about six mile point over the cream of the country, winding up by jumping the 'Gowie' the big brook of this part of the world, and killing him in the open under Beeston Castle. 'Pat' went well, but he does nearly pull my arms out, he fell at the last fence, from excitement, galloping into it and turning head over heels. I was very stiff for three or four days.

I shall not hunt this week, as S. S. likes having me near her. She sends mountains of love to you all. It will

¹ Percy Lyulph Wyndham was born December 5th, 1887.

be rather hard for me to collect my thoughts and turn them on Politics before Monday, particularly as a thousand and one devoted friends expect me to write to them every day. I am delighted to hear of Manenai riding 'Free Lance.' On Friday I rode 'Solyman' at Cholmondeley. A bad day from the 'Sport' point of view, but very enjoyable owing to the weather, the ease of 'Solyman' after 'Pat' and plenty of galloping about and jumping; we ran about six different foxes each for hour and a half into the vale and then back into the park. Riding home the sunset was marvellous.

We are thinking of calling the Baby, Percy Lyulph. The latter is the oldest family name of the Lumleys. 'Lyulphus' being founder of family. Venus, the morning star, which has been our wonder for weeks, presided at his birth, shining straight through the window.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

98

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 8th, 1887.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—Many, many thanks for your congratulations. I have had an anxious time, as Sibell became very weak after the child was born. But to-day I feel happy about her.

I am much honoured by your charge and will, of course, readily undertake it; at the same time I sincerely trust that I may not be called upon to fulfil it. But if it should unfortunately be so, I can promise you to spare no pains in putting your work before the Public.

I have begun to write 'Roland' from the Arab point of view. The incongruity of making the 'Christian Achilles' the hero of a work written in praise of the Arabs, will in any case prevent its being read. But this is, I think, the chief source of my amusement in writing it.

Please give my love to Anne.—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

99

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
December 20th, 1887.

DARLING MAMMA,—We are all very well here ; Sibell in bed with a very smart pink silk jacket on, tied round her with a sash and pinned in front with a brooch, holding a daphne flower, that scents the room, looks, you will be surprised to hear, very nice indeed.

I do wish we could be with you at Christmas, I have read ‘ Love’s labour Lost ’ again, and long to hear every detail about the play and scenery. After it is over you must send me an Acting Copy and full account.

I have just had a busy week—Monday to London and speech at Battersea—Back here and to ‘ The last Judgement ’ at the Cathedral—Wednesday hunted, but in the morning got a note from ‘ R. Yerbrugh ’ member for Chester, asking me to speak that night. We had a most enthusiastic meeting, about 1500 in the Music-hall, with flags and organ. (‘ Rule Britannia ’ is a great incentive to eloquence.) The Post-master General, Swetenham (member for Welsh Constituency), I and Yerbrugh, spoke in the order named. The audience were very kind to me, and the crowd outside gave me three cheers as I got into my brougham. Friday, I rode ‘ Pat ’ at Barbridge—a delicious day, and very good fun. I was pleased, because I had put on him a noseband, crossing under his head and the ends clipped on to the tops of the cheek-bits, (the result being that when you pull the curb-rein, the nose-band pinches him and shuts his mouth) and that he went very well in it. The moral effect on him was so great that I rode him lightly on the snaffle—he never pulled an ounce and jumped as boldly as ever, clearing three open brooks very full, and a bullfinch, with high rail standing more than a yard into the next field.

Yesterday eve, we had a lecture at the Archæological Society on the monumental stones recently found in the walls. I proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer. To-day alas! we are stopped by a frost—That's all the news I have.

I hope poor Pamela's cold is better; if the 'hack' still lived and 'bottle-brush' was with us, he would no longer be able to draw his nice distinctions as, I suppose, she is the 'orse Pamela' now.¹ It has only just struck me, how funny it is that Chang and I have each got a very young baby; give her my best love, tell her that Percy and Cynthia must soon be introduced. Percy is wonderfully intelligent, the doctor says his head is very remarkable and a very clever one. I'm sure I hope so for his own and every-body's sake. He began to laugh, when three days old, which I believe is unusual. There is, however, an adequate explanation, as it was then that he caught sight for the first time of 'Froudy's' ² face. He smiled and thought, 'Come, come, this is not such a dull place as I expected.' Since then he has been very susceptible to the comic view of face, and, I am sorry to say, now laughs at me too.

To-day, I got a *very* kind letter from Mrs. Burne-Jones with which I am very much pleased.

Best love to all, a Merry Xmas to you, Papa, Mary, Guy, Madeline, Pamela, Hugo, Ego, Guy, Cynthia, Fraülein, Zammy, Bess, Jill and Rose, [4 dogs]. I shall drink all your healths on Saturday night, and trust that all your 'Labour' and none of your 'Love' will be 'lost.'³
—Your very loving son, GEORGE.

¹ An old family joke. A footman (nicknamed 'bottle-brush') when told to order Pamela to be saddled by a certain hour asked whether 'the 'orse Pamela,' was intended.

² Nickname for the governess of his step-children.

³ *Love's Labour's Lost* had been acted at Clouds at Christmas time.

100

To his Father

CHIEF SECRETARY'S LODGE,
PHENIX PARK, DUBLIN, *January 20th, 1888.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Many thanks for your letter. The life here is very amusing; pleasant people in the house, and funny people out of it to laugh at; and delightful owing to the presence of Chang and Guy. Arthur is very good asking old Guy to dine every night, so we see a good deal of him. The Pembrokes were here one night, and now there are the De Vescis, Cranbornes, Hugo and Chang, Lady Rayleigh, and Lady Gwendolen Cecil.

The big dinners here amuse me. I took in the other night a Mrs. —, ætat, I should think, 63, very stout, with little podgy hands covered with badly cleaned rings. Her husband is an elderly lawyer, and according to her 'one of the cleverest men in Ireland,' and apparently the one authority upon all questions. Her admiration for Arthur is most comic; she kept saying 'He ought to be a King; shure, I read his speeches 4 times through.' The worship of Arthur by the 'loyalists' is extraordinary. In a book I am reading, 'Greek Life and Thought, From the Age of Alexander to the Roman Conquest,' there is a good sentence, on the power of Alexander, which explains it. I cannot find it to quote, but it is to the effect that great courage being so rare a gift, and so large a part of human misery being due to Fear, all men are prepared to fall down before anyone wholly free from fear. Arthur is by no means Alexander, but having for his battleground a field from which all have run away, he creates a very great impression upon men who have been used to tremble at every threat, and to truckle with the most contemptible of their opponents upon every occasion. They can hardly believe that he does not care 2d. for anything which 'United Ireland' here, and the 'Pall Mall' over the way may say of him. This book, 'Greek Life and Thought,' must make 'Grote' turn in his grave,

and would render people like Morris speechless with indignation. It is written by 'Mahaffy,' a Fellow of Trinity College, with a *strong bias* in favour of oligarchies and imperial politics. The contrast which it presents to all other histories, which crack up any 'little Peddlington' of a democracy and howl at 'Tyrants,' is so marked, that one feels it must be unfair; but in reality this bias is no stronger than the usual one in the opposite direction: and it is just as fair to give the Conservatives a pat on the back, whilst extolling Ptolemy, and to prod the 'Irish Nationalists' when dealing with revolts in Cyrene and Syria, as it is to praise Radicals with Demosthenes and Ireland with Athens.

Yesterday the whole party lunched at the 'Four Courts' with all the Judges *in their robes and wigs*.

The smile which stole over Ashbourne's face, robed and in the execution of his office, can only be compared with that of the captain of the Eton eleven at Lord's cricket ground. The lunch was 'prodigious'; oysters, woodcock, pâté-de-foie-gras, etc. (Mary has had a great success with the Irish bar.) Afterwards Arthur and I drove away on a car, and came in for a 'hostile Demonstration,' driving off amid yells of 'Balfour the liar!' and escorted by running companies of raggamuffins booing and hissing. It amused me very much. One little man had taken up a good position and waited long for the satisfaction of venting his wrath. Wrath is hardly the word, because they see the fun and enjoy the lark of it as much as we did. This morning the papers have columns of 'this, perhaps the most disgraceful act,' etc., 'making a compact with the Judicature in the broad light of day,' and so on. It is a funny country.

Wilfrid is apparently temporarily out of his senses, but I can hardly believe he has said all that is attributed to him. What 'United Ireland' calls 'leaking out through prison walls' means, very likely, lies composed in its own office.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

I enclose a speech I made before leaving England.

101

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, February 5, 1888.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—It is a long time since I have written to you, but now that we are comfortably back here I will try to make up for lost time. I have enjoyed Ireland very much, hunting a little with Guy, and leading a very pleasant and interesting life at the Lodge. The banquets were the only draw-back, and they not a real one, as some of the guests who attend must be seen and heard in their brogue to be realised.

I always took in the most extraordinary ladies of them all, one of them Mrs. —, like a chinless Dutch doll, being phenomenal. We told the company of an accident Arthur and I met with on the Quay; the horse in his brougham fell down and the car on which the detectives ride, came on in Irish fashion and sent both shafts through the back panel. The story of this adventure was greeted in silence, broken at last by Mrs. — ‘How lucky the detectives were there.’—I still laugh to myself at it.

For the last two days we stayed at the Castle, and did a Drawing-room and Ball. I enjoyed seeing so much of Guy who was very sorry to leave Ireland. Everybody loves him at Dublin, and he certainly does look very striking in his Lancer uniform, amongst and above all the other little people at the ceremonies.

After the Ball, Thursday night, I hunted, just getting back in time to change and gobble before starting for the boat. We had a glorious passage, making full amends for the last. Warm as summer and all the stars glittering together with Sirius over all. However we did not look at them all the time as we both went to sleep, sitting on the deck.

We enjoyed it very much and spent a nice idle day here yesterday and to-day for the matter of that. The conservatory is full of miniature hyacinths, jonquils, arum

lilies, carnations, violets, and a beautiful pink rose ramping about over-head. We have been examining the grass-plot at 'the wall' and gloating over the points of the little bulbs that are just appearing; this and rolling half of the lawn-tennis ground is all the work I have done.

I expect to go to London on Friday, but mean only to keep running up and down till Easter, doing, say four days office and three at Saighton. I wonder if Pamela and Fraülein would or could come for a day or two?

Percy is magnificent, I long for you to see him, eyes exactly like Sibell's with Guy's eyelashes. Gibson, the late Attorney General, tried to make his constituents at Liverpool invite me to stand, they, however, preferred a local barrister, Maltinson by name, and he is not going to be opposed!

Katie Westminster's baby, a girl, was born this morning, everything going on well.

I had one good day with the Kildares, riding the horse I bought from Dick, he carried me brilliantly over a big part of the country. Ask Madeline to write me a line about her parties at 'Belton' and so on. What are your plans about going to London?

Love to all.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

102

To his Mother

IRISH OFFICE,
GREAT QUEEN STREET, S.W.,
February 11th, 1888.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Thank you for your delightful letter and thanks a hundred times for the beautiful 'knights.' I found them at 35 last night when I arrived, and they are great companions in an empty house.

Arthur B.'s speech was good. I dined with him afterwards. The Rayleighs were there.

The Office is very dull and dusty and the view from it foggy and filthy.

I hope you will see Percy during the present stage of

his existence; the shape of his head, particularly chin and neck, is like the head of 'Grand-mamma' at Belgrave Square.

I have told Sibell she must write and describe him to you at length, and suppress her false shame, and be blatantly boastful of her son.

I shall go to 'Winter's Tale' on Monday if I can. I know the play well to read, particularly the 'pastoral part' and always think Perdita's speech about

. . . 'Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty;'

and the flowers from Dis' wagon etc., and again Florizel's speech, saying, that whatever thing she does he wishes she would do for ever, when you dance, 'I would you were a wave' (can't remember it) but those two things are lovely.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

103

To his Mother

SAIGHTON,
February 19th, 1888.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I must scrawl a line about 'Winter's Tale' and return Lord Lytton's letter. But first I am so sorry about poor Alfred Seymour, we *shall* miss him if he does die, and go on missing him as the 'mere' Baria will always remind us of his loss. I am *very sorry*.

I did like the play *very much*, Mary Anderson's acting much, and her beauty for the first time.

I can't tell you exactly what I felt as I am writing to catch post, but I think it was this, I thought it 'a thing of Beauty' but could not help feeling nearly all the time that Shakespeare's play was a much more beautiful thing. They have cut it about with a vengeance. Perhaps they are right. The experience they have of English audiences may have taught them that the less

poetry and the more antics the better the public are pleased. I am not abusing it, because *in spite* of constant regret for omissions I was fairly carried away twice ; in the judgment scene and in the ‘ sheep-shearing.’

But the bye-play in the latter is really over-done. It is one of the most beautiful love-scenes, and they hardly gave one time to look or listen with their constant fidgetting about. The scenery is beautiful, but why in the name of Apollo, leave out

‘ pale primroses,
‘ That die unmarried, e’er they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength,—a malady
Most incident to maids.’

The music of the words and the images of flowers which they call up, helps me to realise the scene better than real trees and springs. I like these, mind you, only I want both.

I want the rest of Polixenes’ speech asking Florizel if his father was bed-rid.

I wanted the shepherd’s account of his wife ‘ Her face afire, with labour and the things she took to quench it.’

Between this scene and the last, I suppose of necessity, they have cut out all the body of the play and only left the legs for it to run on. If the time is too short, for us to have the bear and the rest of Autolycus and the fun, we ought to get the *whole* of the great scenes.

One result of the wholesale cutting is that though Robertson and M. Anderson do act the part they play, they do not act the Leontes and Hermione whom W. depicted. At least I think not. In the beginning, left out, of the scene in which Leontes sends Perdita away, he calls all his courtiers liars and the baby ‘ a brat ’ showing that he was in a mad passion, but Robertson, acting what is left, makes him gentle as a lamb.

From these lovely things which Hermione says—

‘ But I have
That honourable grief lodged here which burns
Worse than tears drown.’

‘ Adieu, my Lord :

I never wished to see you sorry ; now

I trust I shall.’

‘ . . . How this will grieve you,

When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that

You have thus published me ! Gentle my lord,

You scarce can right me thoroughly, then

To say you did mistake.’

I always imagined her more *proud* and less *crushed* by sorrow than M. Anderson acts. But M. Anderson does act the judgement splendidly from her point of view and quite carried me away making me gulp and shiver. I thought the thunderbolt and darkness effective, and was glad of the latter to recover in, but they are not mentioned in the play and the mere announcement of Mamilius’ death, and its effect just after ‘ there is no truth in the Oracle ’ is, don’t you think, higher art, and more cruelly like human nature ?

Owing to cutting Paulina, as good a character as Emilia in Othello, is practically abolished.

This is another gem gone—

Leontes. ‘ We are to speak in public, for this business Will raise us all.’

Antigonus. ‘ To laughter, as I take it, If the good truth were known.’

But it is all the same excellent as it is, though not so excellent as it might be. For myself I should like the big scenes acted in full and the rest left out altogether, but printed in the Programme to read between the Acts.

They keep the glorious ‘ I know you are now a gentleman born.’

‘ Ay and have been so any time these four hours.’

And the still better

‘ The first gentlemanlike tears that ever we shed.’

Shep. ‘ We may live, son, to shed many more.’

Clown. ‘ Ay or else, ’twere *hard luck* being in so preposterous a state as we are.’

That 'hard luck' is really one of the funniest things in the world.

I could discover no trace of a 'Prince' in Florizel, he was more like an acrobat in the Love Scene.

But I like it and shall go at least twice again. No time for more.

Love to all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

104

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
Easter Day, April 1st, 1888.

DARLING MAMMA,—We are so delighted to know you are well and are revelling in the hot sun and under the blue sky. In the conservatory where we have been sitting, a bee has hummed us nearly to sleep, while a little wren and white butterfly flew and fluttered about the roses.

George Curzon is here till Tuesday. Pamela must bring her guitar and might bring her habit, in case she is offered a mount from Eaton.

All the daisies have come out with a rush this morning, and are steadily pointing at the sun. We go to hear music in the Cathedral this evening and go to bed very merry. Love to all, Darling Mamma.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

105

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
April 5th, 1888.

DARLING MAMMA,—I was very glad to get your letter, you must rest a good deal until you no longer feel like a 'cocked hat.'

I think Pamela is enjoying herself here. We went to 'Tarpoley' chases yesterday, a very pleasant little

meeting, I really think Papa would have enjoyed it. Just thirty or forty people one knew well and a moderate crowd. Cuckoo and I rode. Riding on the inside it was quite easy to see the water jump close twice, get a good view of every fence and see the finish. We look forward very much to your coming on Saturday.

Pamela looked very pretty dining at Eaton and got on well, but after dinner took up an impregnable position on a solitary chair beside a long oak table.

Bromley Davenport however was sufficiently attracted to break his back leaning against the latter for a long time in his efforts to talk to her.

We had a bad day's hunting to-day. If Madeline brings her habit I daresay the Duke will give her a mount one day. I hope her ball was a success and that the party goes on being pleasant without being too exciting. Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

106

To his Mother

TOURS,
May 23rd, 1888.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—Here we are at Tours, not 'triste ou gai tour à tour' but both of us very gay at Tours together. I am afraid that I have put off writing too long although we have only been gone a few days. We have travelled so much already that Rouen begins to fade while Dieppe, Newhaven, and Victoria Station seem recollections of an antenatal dream.

Murray's guide says somewhat cynically that 'the Newhaven-Dieppe route has nothing to recommend it but its cheapness.' As we however got one of the only two cabins one did not mind waiting two hours at Newhaven before the boat started. Being in no sort of hurry, we both enjoyed the calm sea, moon, sunrise and approach to 'la belle France' very much. It has been glorious weather, cloudless sky, blazing suns, fresh breezes, blue,

orange and amethystine sunsets, little rich shining green valleys, each field made into a room by walls of poplars green as chrysoprase (or peas) or of alders amber-coloured with the sun shining through them. At Rouen, we lived next to the old gate-house, 1517, called 'De la grosse Horloge,' from the great stone clock set in it. Inside the arch, and on houses near are Renaissance mouldings, whilst at its side rises the 'Beffroi' an old tower from which the curfew still rings every night; sixty yards the other way is the cathedral, mystic, wonderful in the moonlight; one of the west towers, early thirteenth century and splendid, the other quite a different shape, 15th century, and the front late flamboyant. One ought of course to dislike it, but the weird mixture is very delightful. The side doors, 12th century, are perfect. The inside, 13th, quite splendid, so much higher and narrower than our cathedrals. In it are monuments of Richard Cœur de Lion, whose heart was buried there and of Rollo, 1st Duke of Normandy; in the choir a beautiful black marble and alabaster tomb of the husband of Diane de Poitiers and, opposite, a monument of two Cardinals L'Amboise, which must 'give to think' to the perpetrators of modern outrages in this sort. But besides the Cathedral there is St. Ouen, bigger, 15th century, very light and graceful, and St. Maclou 15th century. In the picture gallery we saw three predillas by Perugino, delicious. And in the Museum stained glass, 13th to 15th century, and a hundred other things. I can't tell you all that has happened here besides William the Conqueror dying and Joan of Arc being burnt, but a great deal has. We drove one evening up on to a hill with white cliffs overlooking a bend of the river Seine, where you can count twelve green islands. I forgot to say that we were shown over the Cathedral by 'le Suisse' a splendid fellow in a top hat, his great admiration was for the modern pictures of tortured martyrs in the side chapel, as he said before one of the most revolting 'En nature morte c'est fort jolie.' On leaving we had to pack for the first time; I jumped on the box till it met and when

we unpacked at Caen my hat inside, (with a damp sponge in it) was like this :— [drawing].

On the way to Caen we passed through forests of slender trees, enchanted woods rising high above the mottled sward of mossy green. At Caen are the Abbaye aux Hommes, built by William Conqueror and Abbaye aux Dames by Matilda. The Norman towers of the first, of grey lichened stone, are alone worth the journey. In Caen there are seventy buildings of Norman date, so 'à quoi bon' to try and describe it? It is on the 'Orne' one of those little quiet French rivers, hidden almost in long grass, irises, alders, and poplars. We went, first to see the big Perugino, Marriage of the Virgin, delightful, but we almost liked better a little one of St. Jerome. The next day i.e. yesterday, we went to Bayeux, a perfect little town; before 'doing' the Cathedral, we leant long over a bridge looking at a mill stream from a deep green river, with masses of lilac hanging over an old wall and reflected in it. I was getting so pleased with all the cathedrals and memories of these little Norman towns that in the 'place,' a green surrounded by an avenue of limes, I began discoursing away to Sibell on the dulness of the life of the poor in England etc. 'Fancy these people with a Cathedral like that, built by Odo' and the tapestry worked by Matilda in the public Library!' Meeting the baker, I said 'Pardon Monsieur, voulez-vous bien nous diriger à la Bibliothèque Publique?' 'Ah mais je ne connais la Bibliothèque Publique.' 'Nous désirons voir la tapisserie, vous la connaissez sans doute.' 'Ah que non.' There are many *Bakers* as well as '*Woodmen* in the world.' To-day we have travelled all day to Tours. I enjoyed it immensely, but could not help thinking that old Ruskin made too great a case, as they say, of the poor modern traveller whirled at lightning speed past scenery which is perforce denied to his sight. We did our 160 miles in twelve hours, knocking off now and again for a few minutes and for two hours at Le Mans. Such a day! past little woods, my beloved be-poplared valleys; they are, it is no use denying it, a little bit alike, but I cannot

have too many of them. Past a grey Chateau sitting on a stream, with a water-gate and past little houses cut in the rock over the wide Loire, dyed by the sunset, and with a sweep through the vineyards into the town. Have been walking with Sibell, smoking in a courtyard with fountain and large plane tree, feeling like Don Quixote, and now tired by all the beautiful sights and the scent of lilac everywhere, I go to bed to think of our drives to Chenonceaux, Amboise, Azay-le-Rideau and Chinon, and to dream of endless aisles in Cathedrals immeasurably high, thronged by Norman Dukes, la Pucelle, Catherine de Medici, Diane de Poitiers, etc., etc.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

107

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, August 26th, 1888.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Many thanks for your letter. I envy you going abroad ; it always amuses me and puts me into high spirits. I enjoyed Ireland. Arthur and I stayed as the only guests at the Vice-Regal, and were much pampered. I rode in the Phoenix every morning at 9.30 with Her Ex. and the little boy. Breakfasted at 11. Then worked at the Castle till 6, when we played Lawn Tennis till 8. Lady Londonderry told me she meant to ask you all to stay on your way to or from Killarney. I hope she will not forget, as I am sure Pamela would enjoy the life at the Vice-Regal for a day or two ; the stables of good horses, soldiers drilling, polo, and talkative Irishmen to dinner. A nephew, I believe, of Prince Edward was staying with him, and dined and did the round of amusements during our visit. He was the cynosure of every eye, and proved that old caricatures of small German princes are in no way overdrawn. At the big review he rode about in a white pot hat with a broad black band and peacock's feather, a green plush waistcoat, and white trousers with buttons sewn on at the knee,

stuffed into long yellow boots. He drank like a fish, or a baron in 'Vivian Grey,' and was altogether without conversation or mind. Lord Londonderry tried him in vain on every subject ; at last elicited that he had travelled a great deal but without meeting with any interesting men or things. He spoke of Nijni Novgorod and after stiff cross-examination owned to having seen the yearly fair. When asked if that was not an interesting sight, he said, 'Yes, it is vary interesting, I meet some Germans there.' One of the most amusing things I have come across lately in Ireland are the shorthand notes of an Irish inquest. Tim Harrington, for the next of kin, began the cross-examination of a policeman in this wise : 'Come he-ere, me morderer.' Then, turning to the Jury, 'I'll soon show ye how I treat a morderer.' Voice in the back of the Court : 'More power to your elbow, Tim !' It is upon a careful selection of the evidence given before *these* courts, as reported by Nationalist papers, that Gladstone now founds the greater part of his speeches !

I am ploughing through the 'Decline and Fall' for four hours every morning, reading other books for the rest of the day. We are quite alone here and enjoy it very much. I ride for 1½ hours in the evenings at 5 o'clock.

Sibell sends her love.—Your affectionate son,

GEORGE.

108

To his sister, Madeline

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, August 31st, 1888.

MUCH BELOVED MADELINE,—Your letter was a great delight. What a good shot you made at my Birthday ! I got it on the very morning of the day, and it was the only one I did get, for we were away from home at Castle Bromwich for the Birmingham Festival. We heard the 'Elijah' and 'Judith,' a new oratorio by Hubert Parry. The first of course was beautiful and the second a great success. We watched Parry's face as it was played ; it must be a great moment to hear the Harmonies you have

been hatching quietly for months suddenly burst forth from hundreds of voices, and go roaring and soaring upward, carrying the hearts of listening thousands with them.

What fun you must be having and how I envy you. I believe you really like travelling in the wild way which I do. Even reading your address makes me shiver with excitement, 'Cadenabbia, Lago di Como, Italia'!! I long to get into the next train and rush after you; not but what we are enjoying ourselves very much here. Fired by your excellent example we are having a prolonged Honeymoon. Reading, walking, riding and playing favourite tunes on the piano.

I have never seen Chillon.

'There are seven pillars of Gothic mould
In Chillon dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way.'

They may say what they like of Byron. I *know* that, when all is said and done, he thoroughly understood the *excitement* of being in Italy, and still helps others to take delight in it. Of course, as you say, when 'the evening has been perfect and with *such* a moon,' no one can describe it. That's why one has to go South and see it. But when you are at Venice and Florence and in the way of seeing these things, do just what every Cook's tourist and American sightseer does, buy a little parchment Childe Harold with red leaves, and though it is old and hackneyed and unfashionable, turn to Canto IV. xxvii., and read

'The moon is up and yet it is not night;
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be,—
Melted in one vast Iris of the West;
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air an island of the blest!'

And so on. Very old, no doubt, and copied into a thou-

sand foolish young ladies' albums, but still just the thing to read after a 'perfect evening with such a moon.'

When you are in Florence just write down the names of the things you like best, and we will have an Italian feast for four when you come back and talk of nothing else all night. Besides all the regular well-known beautiful pictures, mind you look at Perugino, No. 153, 'Belle Arti'; at the fresco in S. Maddalena de Pazzi, and for gorgeous colouring at Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the Riccardi Palace. Drive to Fiesoli and slowly back down the zig-zagging white road in the sunset hour. Florence is the most perfect Paradise of the sightseer, you have everything packed in the space of Belgrave Square, and can walk in and out of scores of historic Treasure-houses of Beauty with all the ease of a turn in the East garden and round by the green river at Clouds. No getting into flies and intricate plans, you have only to saunter through the streets where flowers are sold at every corner.

Give my love to Charlie. Sibell sends hers.—Ever your
loving Brother, GEORGE.

109

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, September 10th, 1888.

MY OWN DARLING MAMMA,—I have been very bad about writing, but have had such a busy month that I do not feel guilty. I sent off the manuscript of my reply to Dr. Walsh on Wednesday and lectured on 'Egypt' on Thursday night. The room was packed. Sibell thought it a success; I got so tired before the end that I thought I must be tiring my audience, but she, and the report in the papers approve. On Friday we took a whole holiday, a glorious day of hot sun. We made up our minds at breakfast to drive to Halkyn sixteen and a half miles to see the children, so we sent on a horse to Hawarden, and started in the dog-cart at quarter to twelve, arriving at twenty minutes to two. The air there is wonderfully

fresh. I noticed the change so much, that it makes me think that here it must be very relaxing. On the way back we had tea with the Grand Old Man! He was very civil to me, taking me to the top of the old Castle and showing me a book presented to him by Italian Students. He seems to manage everything there himself. I was much struck by this several times, e.g. telling them to move some steps in the garden to save the grass, giving orders to the gardener about trifles, and wanting to open a parcel himself. It is very odd that anyone with so many other things to think of, should care whether there was any grass in the garden or not. The drive was delicious, one deep glade of trees on a hill, with stone walls covered with moss, and little pink flowers and docks smelt so of Isel that I thought of my early teens most of the way back. Dick is here so I am just going to have a game of lawn-tennis. To-morrow we go till Thursday to the Edmund Talbots for two days' grouse driving. We have a splendid border here of dahlias, gladiolus, China roses and marigolds. I wish you could see it. Best love to Papa and Pamela.—Your very loving son, GEORGE.

110

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,

October 15th, 1888.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I enclose you a very condensed report of a speech I made last Wednesday at Haslingden in Lord Hartington's constituency. It was an open meeting of working men, 800 or 900, with about 60 dissentients. The best audience I have ever spoken to. I spoke 1 hour and 25 minutes.

Give my best love to darling Manenai. I should so much have liked to welcome her. Richmond is painting away at Sibell. It ought to be a good picture. It is being done the way I like, the very opposite of Realism, a round window behind, oleanders, myrtles and cypress trees.

I believe I go to Ireland on Friday night. Read my

letter in Times of the 12th, Friday. Morley's answer and the Leading Article in the 13th, Saturday. And my reply, if they print it in to-morrow's Tuesday. I think I have got the best of it.

Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

111

To his Father

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
DUBLIN CASTLE, 24.10.88.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I have not had a moment to answer your long and interesting letter.

Your parallel between accusations of lying and fighting is very good ; I knew I had not over-praised ' Dorothy Osborne ' to you, you feel for her just as I do.

My letters during the last 3 months have been written by me alone from material which I telegraphed over here for. Arthur has not seen any of them until they were in print, and sometimes not even then, as he rarely reads the paper.

I wrote one to the ' Freeman ' yesterday in reply to O'Brien, but shall have to send a similar answer to the English papers, as I see his letter appeared in them too.

Oct. 26th.

I have not found time to finish this letter till now. We send off on an average 70 letters a day from this office. Last night we dined with Ashbourne, the Lord Chancellor ; Lady A. and 22 men ; room enough for ten and waiters enough for eight. The heat was terrible, it melted my bones till I hung like a limp rag over the back of my chair, as the hours slowly rolled by and one unwholesome dish after another was borne in from the provincial ' Gunter.'

Nearly everybody was a legal Light : the Chief Justice, Chief Baron, Attorney, Master of the Rolls, and sprinkling of rising barristers who have been successful in ' Crimes Act ' prosecutions. It was interesting to hear their opinion of Webster's speech ; they all think it very good. The

vast Panorama of crime and outrage, slowly unfolded for days together, must astonish Gladstonians with short memories and make their allies sigh for the good old days of '81 and '82. I expect my reply to O'Brien will be in to-morrow's papers. I have enjoyed this week; you certainly do get a chance of studying men, behind the scenes of the Irish Office. It is rather depressing in spite of the daily interest almost amounting to excitement. Sometimes it's nearly as bad as reading Zola. There are so few on either side who pretend to act on principle, or even care to win for the sake of winning. I care for this now much more than I ever thought I could. I long for it intensely as you wish to win a stroke at 'vantage-all.' *Everything* is certainly better this year, and I really hope that Arthur will beat them after all. If he does it will be to a great extent with mercenary troops, and his honour, like Hannibal's, will be all the greater.

I had a gallop with Osbert before breakfast this morn.
Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Re Haslingden speech. They wrote to Arthur asking him to lend me out for the night.

112

To Charles Waldstein

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, October 25th, 1888.

MY DEAR WALDSTEIN,—I was delighted to see the well-known handwriting again. I have run down here for a hunt to-morrow, but shall be back in London on Wednesday.

I will write to A. B. about the interview, but I fear nothing will alter the tone of the American Press.

I know a case in which an Editor of a 'Frisco paper was offered the true account of an affair which he had misrepresented. He wrote very civilly to express his regrets, but added that he could not afford to print the truth about Ireland.

An interview, however, has charms for the public and can in any case do no harm, provided the pressman plays fair.

We must manage a good talk before you go to Greece and after your return. If you are up in London any day between the 28th of November and 4th of December, do let me know. How about Sunday 2nd? Could not we arrange something in the way of breakfast with Godfrey?¹ If not, lunch with me that day.

I have got the 'Hermes' in the Hall.—Yours ever,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

113

To Charles Waldstein

IRISH OFFICE,
November 29th, 1888.

MY DEAR WALDSTEIN,—I am afraid I have failed in my mission. Mr. Balfour has once before granted an interview to an American pressman, breaking through what he believes to be the traditions of all English Ministers with great reluctance and after much hesitation. He found, to use his own words so far as I remember them, the interviewer to be 'both ignorant, foolish and untrustworthy.' The latter, as a matter of fact, went straight from Mr. Balfour to Mr. Parnell, submitted his notes of the former's observations to the latter for his comments, and published both together with a lie to the effect that the report had been revised by the Chief Secretary. After this melancholy experience he is, not unnaturally, loath to repeat the experiment!

When am I to see you?—Yours ever and in haste,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

114

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 22nd, 1888.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—How very good of you to send me a copy of your book. I am *very much* obliged for it.

¹ Mr. Godfrey Webb.

I read it last night before going to bed and liked it very much, particularly sonnets II, VI, IX, X and XIII. The last is admirable.

I like the alternate rhyming in the octave, and the 3rd rhyme sound in the 6th and 8th lines, in II, X and XIII. The double rhyme sound in these lines of XIII is very rich and beautiful.

The first line of II, 'Naked I came into the world of pleasure,' gives great 'pleasure' to the ear and will cling to the memory.

I am sorry to say that I have had but little time to write, and see no prospect of a more rational life for some time to come. Some day I hope we may have a poetical debauch in the summer time together. I long for a pure breath of poetry to clear my lungs of the poisonous dust of Political controversy.

Wishing you and Anne all good things for Christmas.—
Your affectionate cousin, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

115

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
Xmas Eve, 1888.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I wish you, Papa, Guy, Pamela, Dorothy, and Fraülein the merriest of Christmasses, and wish we could be with you in body as well as in mind. We have been gadding since the morn we left you. That day we did a school, missed our Luncheon, arrived in London and took an hour driving to Richmonds to dine and meet Andrew Lang, had to train back owing to frost. Friday we gave prizes and I also made a political speech, Tuesday I had my big speech at Sale, Thursday hunted and spoke at a Primrose League Meeting (three hours and a half in a hot room and nine miles home in a dog-cart at 11 p.m.). Friday hunted by train and spoke in uniform at prize-giving to Volunteers. Sale speech a success, two columns and a half in local paper, one in 'Manchester Courier' and a notice in London papers, even in the

'Times,' December 20th. First time have had such an honour!

I send 'Manchester Courier' report, and the notes from which I spoke. A new patent of my own which may amuse Papa. They are a map, so that you can see exactly where you are in your speech and the relation and proportion of the various parts of it.

I shall drink all your healths to-night and hope to get letters from you to-morrow. Had fair day's hunting on Thursday. Post going. Very best love in tons to you all.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

116

To his Mother

CHIEF SECRETARY'S LODGE,
 PHENIX PARK, DUBLIN, January 6th, 1889.

DARLING DARLING MAMMA,¹—I do not know how bad it is but anyhow we will undo the bad and build up the beauty of 'Clouds' again. I do hope Pamela and you and Thompson and everybody are none the worse. Was Mary there? Of course send as many to Saughton as may help you. Can I help by coming over? Wire if I can.

Post just going, if you are all well, all is well. The form is the reality, not the substance and Clouds shall be again, and in five years all this forgotten.

I love you.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

117

To his Mother

CHIEF SECRETARY'S LODGE,
 PHENIX PARK, DUBLIN, January 7th, 1889.

DARLING, DARLING MAMMA,—I loved to get your letter, and love you all the more. Just as last year in my escape from utter loss, when Percy was born, I could realize more

¹ On hearing that Clouds had been burnt.

how tightly we are bound, and how we all stand and fall together, so now.

I shall not come over till I hear I can help, but alas, for real sad things there is no help. But *mind* you send Dorothy and Guy and Fraülein and Pam. and everybody or anybody to Saughton. They will be all right there and can stay as long as they like. I can't cease from moving through the passages and looking out of the windows at the views we loved. How much memory is. For I never knew till now how I loved and knew every nook in Clouds. We must make it again at once. I wish I had realms to sacrifice in order to begin at once defeating evil Fortune and making it all lovely again. But I do thank God for your safety and Mary's children and love you all, if possible more. Life may be a dream but when just you and Papa, Mary, Guy, Mad. and Pam. are injured you stand out and are more than Eternity to me.

GEORGE.

118

To his Father

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
DUBLIN CASTLE, *January 16th, 1889.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I read your two letters to Sibell with great interest. It was wonderful of you speaking so soon after the disaster. I have great hopes that the Insurance Company will behave well, as a fire in a large and well-known private house makes numbers insure who jog along unmoved by the destruction of Theatres or Manufactories. If the house and offices are insured in a lump, I hope they may have to give you up to the total amount for which both were insured. If this is the case perhaps you will get enough for the house alone.

I am so sorry for your Chippendale bookcase and the little chimney pieces. But, of course, the real loss is the cruel loss of all the time and work you have given.

Sibell came last night, which was nice, bringing delicious

photographs of Percy. Arthur B. gives a ball in the Castle to-night. Mind you send Dorothy to Saughton if it is any help. We go back about February 4th, and should love to have all or any.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

119

To his Father

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
DUBLIN CASTLE, Jan. 29th, 1889.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We were delighted to hear of your victory, I had been reading the returns carefully since the 14th when I understood your election would take place. I have been hunting a little here and have been very lucky in seeing sport on the days I go out. Saturday with the Kildares we drew a favourite cover of Guy's 'Turnings.' Last year he and I saw it drawn blank. On Saturday we found at once and ran a fast ring of 20 minutes, viewed the fox away on the far side as the hounds came up a second time to the cover (a small gorse), lifted them with no delay and ran *very fast* for 48 minutes more. All the horses ridden out. Very few saw it. I rode my grey 'Dick.' After hunting I went by train to spend Sunday with the Ormondes at Kilkenny, and was persuaded to stay Monday and accept a mount from a Mr. Smithwick who was mounting Lilah Ormonde. We did little all the morning and she went home. At five minutes past four we found in a small gorse, dashed away and ran for one hour and three minutes without casting the hounds. It is years since I have seen such a wild hunt. I enjoyed it immensely on a strange but very good horse in a very wild strange country. The first 25 minutes were *very fast*, the hounds a field ahead all the time, only three others, a Mr. and Mrs. Langrish and the master's brother 'Conollan' were even in sight. We were all level for a time then Conollan got a field a-head, then the hounds turning—and by jumping a wall into a planta-

tion, I got a field ahead for five minutes or so. As the pace slackened running through a park the master and one farmer caught us, and we six hunted on and on over moorland and big ditches till all our horses could only lob along. At eight minutes past five the hounds checked, so the Master 'lifted them and lost the fox.' But this was really a good thing as it was getting too dark to ride, and we should never have got our tired horses out of a ditch had we fallen. Over 30 people started to ride. Thursday week I had a very good day in Meath, so that out of six day's hunting I have had three first rate days, seeing each of them, two fair and one bad, a wonderfully lucky average.

Very best love to all. I hope to hear from some of you soon.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Let Guy see this and tell him the 'Turnings' run was first rate, only the other put it out of my head.

120

To his Father

SAUGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, *February 21st, 1889.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I send a very indifferent report of my Manchester speech made on Saturday last. They have left out most of the best points and made nonsense of my criticism of Morley's attack on the magistrates who tried E. Harrington.

I spoke very loud and distinctly but the reporters were ten yards to my right instead of in front of me and the room a bad one for hearing. My audience were 300 delegates from the various branches of the Cheshire and Lancashire Conservative Working men's Federation, of which Arthur B. is President.

I spoke again at Blackburn on Tuesday for Cranborne, a crowded and wildly enthusiastic meeting of cotton operatives, 1100 of them packed into a schoolroom. I spoke for 40 minutes. The meeting was an open one,

yet there was only seven dissentients. They did not care a brass farthing for O'Brien, and cheered Arthur's name more than anyone else's.

Altogether I don't think the 'National Protest!!' can be looked upon as a success.

I am very pleased with the mare I bought in Ireland. I rode her in a fine run last Thursday. The hounds met here, we found at the gorse, the fox went away in a second, but was continually headed, and the scent apparently bad. We then drew Waverton gorse a mile east of Saighton. Found and got away at once, and ran at a fair hunting pace S.E. until we came to the 'Gowie,' but the fox finding it flooded turned half right and ran straight for the hills and through the park of Bolesworth Castle, which you can see on a fine day from our dining room. The pace got better and better and instead of going straight into the mountain land above Bolesworth, the fox took a line round the base of a spur and up a green valley running into the hills, the hounds began to beat us getting two fields ahead, and the fox was viewed just in front of them into the rocky and heathery heights, above Harthill village. Point six and a half miles, about ten as we went, all grass. We did not manage to mark our fox to ground, and this is not astonishing as the crest of the hills is perforated with earths. On Monday we had a seven and a half mile point and killed. The first three miles were very fast and pleasant, but we then checked for ten minutes or more, and the rest was very slow hunting over a horrible country near salt-works. I never heard of any pack showing such sport as 'Tates'. Since Christmas, hunting four days a week, they have hardly been out without doing something worth seeing. Corbet on the other hand, has had extraordinarily bad luck.

After speaking at Blackburn, I got up at 6.30, and hunted by train from Manchester yesterday, a gallop in the morning but nothing after that. I rode home eighteen miles.

We go to London to-day, but I hope to hunt twice a week.

Give my love to Uncle Henry and Aunt Constance.—
Your most affectionate son, GEORGE.

121

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

IRISH OFFICE,
GREAT QUEEN STREET, S.W., May 18, 1889.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I shall make a great effort to get to you on June 29th. I have had a very anxious time but am now satisfied with Sibell's progress. I have to go out with Yeomanry next week and up to the end of May, so put off calling on me till June 1 and after. I am very glad to hear you are going to give us another vol. I am quite sure I prefer your *vocabulary* to that of all the other contemporary writers.

I wrote the sonnet over the page the other night after a conversation with a person who complained bitterly of having nothing to do. I tried to cheer her with 'Don Ferdinando can't do more than he can do,' but that applies more to my disease of never doing the things I care most about owing to working all day at things that weary.—
Your affectionate cousin, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

Oh ! do not mourn because the long hours pass
And leave us weary with no work achieved,
Worn as the sands o'er which the waves have weaved
Meaningless meshes, dimpled in its mass.
Wave after wave but weighs on it, alas !
To print a page all purposeless,—reprieved
A moment e'er the watery ploughs that grieved
Fill in the furrows that shall give no grass.
The cornlands suffer torture all as keen
To feel the whirlwind lay their darling fruit,
Or year by year in yielding it to man.
And barren shores steeped in a tearful sheen
Reflect the sunset's rosy rapture ;—mute
And poor, yet flushed when richer fields are wan.

CHAPTER V

JULY 1889 TO JULY 1892

Member for Dover—Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mr. Arthur Balfour—Death of Robert Browning—W. E. Henley and the 'New Review'—Translations from French Poets—Bayreuth—General Election Campaign.

122

To his Sister, Mary

CLIVEDEN,
MAIDENHEAD, August 3rd, 1889.

DARLING OLD CHANG,—This is to wish you many happy returns of to-day, upon each of which you are to be far stronger than now. When Sibell comes back from here I must run down and see you for a part of a day. I do hope you are getting stronger and that the sea soothes without depressing you. I, too, am reading Fitzgerald's letters; very delightful, I think, especially the early ones. It is rather saddening to mark how the sparkle and bubbles of youth slowly evaporate as he gets older, so that after turning over 100 pages you find you have passed with him from youth to a mellow age: you find yourself no longer smiling and smirking over his humorous touches, but stopping to think rather mournfully of the unrelenting process by which he is stripped gradually bare of early friends.

So it is. But I'm not going to moralise or mope. As he says, 'What are auctions but sales, what are pictures but paintings?'

I was at Portsmouth yesterday; the arrival of the German squadron was good; great white clouds, like round hills of snow, rolling across the blue sky before the blithe wind that whipped little puffs of spray from the

pointed crests of waves wrought in jade and chrysoprase. 12 miles of English ships bellowing a sullen welcome from giant guns, and all around a swarm of white-sailed yachts dancing in the gleams of sunlight.

Sibell is getting on and sends her love. If I find anything nice to send you for your birthday, I will ; if not I will wait till I do.

I like the account given in an exam. of Dryden and Buckingham and applied by the 'Daily News' to Arthur and R. Churchill—'They were friends at first but afterwards became contemporaries.'

I am writing a 'pome' called 'Aristodemus,' and like it so far, degree of farness being sketch of idea and verses on the plums of the story. Whether I will fill in the gaps and make a whole of it is, I sorrow to say, very doubtful.

With lots of love.—Your loving brother, GEORGE.

123

To his Mother

August 19th, 1889.

DARLING MAMMA,—I am afraid I have become a very bad correspondent and with no excuse as I ought to have answered your letters about Percy. I think of him a great deal and loved hearing that you are all fond of him. I hope he has been good, sometimes he is very obstinate and he loses his temper occasionally in a very Wyndham-y manner. I did not know you were all coming up, if you are we had better have him back. Tell me your plans.

I find the House rather hard work with the Office as well. I go to the latter at 12 o'clock, and from thence to the House and from the House home, latterly at 2 or even 2.30, fourteen hours of exhausted air. I write this before plunging into the swirl of the last hard week's work. Five days of Ireland running. Light Railways to-day and then Estimates, 'Prison,' 'Chief Secretary's' and 'Lord Lieutenants'! When Irish Estimates are on, I sit behind Arthur and note all the speeches as if I was

going to reply to each, and keep going out to his room to refresh his memory on each subject by consulting the official files which are spread out in three rows across the floor of the room. I enjoy it but it is tiring to *attend* for so long on a stretch. The Irish are continually making side hits at me for my letters, for fetching papers for Arthur etc. I don't think I shall speak this year as time is the great object and no one would thank me for wasting it.

It will be delightful seeing you. Thank Papa for his letter. I am afraid I shall not manage partridges at Clouds.—Your very loving son,
 GEORGE.

124

To Wilfrid Scarwen Blunt

DERWENT HALL,
 SHEFFIELD, September 5th, 1889.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I hope I have not kept your proofs too long. I have been shooting every day and so had to snatch the time for reading them with any care. You ask me what I think of the Preface.—I like the discussion of the 'manner' of your work dealing with the sonnet-form and assonance, and think it will give useful encouragement to the victims of critics. Personally I should have dismissed the 'psychology' in fewer lines (you do only touch on it) as many may buy the book who have not read your other works. I have no 'Tennyson' or 'Browning' by me, and my memory may be at fault, but I think your assertion on page ix. that Tennyson gives no specimen of the sonnet is too sweeping. In his 'Juvenilia' there are, I think, several; one, if I recollect rightly, to Alexander. On the other hand, I cannot recall a single sonnet by Browning. Unless you are certain it would be as well to look this up, or some foolish critic short of copy will waste a paragraph in setting you right.

I daresay you have read the proofs of the poems over with someone better qualified to give an opinion than I,

and you do not ask for mine, but I must tell you I like many of them very much. Press errors sometimes escape the eye of an author, so you will not mind my pointing out one or two passages that check a stranger to the poems in reading them. In 'Worth Forest,' p. 127, line 4, is not the full stop after 'watching their own.' a mistake? as the construction is carried on in the 6th line—'and thought they saw a vision.'—As it stands this would refer to 'his eyes' instead of to the 'two boys' who are clearly the subject of the verb. I should put a (;) after 'own' and the intervening sentence 'His . . . had ;' in a parenthesis.

In 'A New Pilgrimage,' XXII, 7, should not wilderness's be wildernesses?

Before dwelling on the poems I like best I must mention one or two lines which, though no doubt they would be musical if read by the author, seem to me to run the risk of being read clumsily by anyone new to them, and of thus failing to give him pleasure.

In 'A Perfect Sonnet' (which I like very much), line 7, the ending 'poets', popes'' seems to me rather heavy and harsh. Would much be sacrificed by substituting

'of kings and popes

And peoples throb to this new truth sublime'?

I hope you won't think the suggestion impertinent from one with a poor ear to another with a remarkably true one, but I shall hazard it and risk a few more. In 'Pilgrimage' II. I do not like the 2nd rhyme of the octave carried through it and over into the sextett. In 'The Old Squire' the 3rd line of the first stanza has only 3 beats in it, whilst there are 4 in the 3rd lines of all the others. I confess I should like a word of 2 syllables where 'sweet' stands in the first.

In 'Sancho Sanchez,' II, 2, you have, evidently on purpose to give the suddenness of the sound, begun with the word 'suddenly.' But here, again, and especially as the rhythm of this poem is throughout so easy and liquid, anyone reading it for the first time would, I think,

find a difficulty in scanning the line. 'Rang suddenly to Matins' gains in ease but loses in force. Would not the compromise 'suddenly rang to matins' keep enough of the effect you wish to produce and check the run of the rhythm far less?

In 'Pilgrimage,' XIII, line 4, since it is never wise to leave a handle for a fool to take hold of, I am not sure that the exclamation 'one of these!' is quite safe. There are idiots in this world and one of them might refer it to the 'Hero, Emperor and Queen' of the line before. If you said 'since first I leaned and looked from one of these,' you would leave no excuse for misconception. But, here, perhaps I am too meticulous and play myself the role of idiot.

I have now given the sum total of all I do not care for in the book, I am glad all the rest has been written.

'Sancho Sanchez' is an addition to the wealth of English literature. It runs in my head and abides with me. It is like the strong wine of the country, it paints with a few bold strokes to the very life. It is meat and drink after the kickshaws and Tokay of our 'Ballade'-mongers and Sonneteers. It is the Catholic South.

In 'A New Pilgrimage' I find most pleasure in IV, the 3rd quatrain of V, in XI.—'That summer stands to me a tower of towers, to which my gladness clings in spite of all' is perfect. XIV is excellent.

XVII. 'For lo! the nations, the imperial nations' is a grand line. I care much for the last few about Switzerland and very much for XXX.

'No gardened rose

Scattering its leaves is chaster than she is'

to the end is delicious. (I should put 'her' for 'its' in the line I quote.) But the finest, to my mind, are XXXVI, XXXVIII and XXXIX.

Next to 'Sanchez,' and perhaps bracketed with these sonnets, I like 'From the Arabic.' The 'Idler's Calendar' you know I enjoy.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

125

To his Mother

DERWENT HALL,
SHEFFIELD, September 5th, 1889.

DARLING MAMMA,—The boat is a capital idea, and no trouble at all, at all. But now I am so stupid I do not know their address, so will you write again to Saughton telling me to whom I ought to send the cheque and the address. Do they call themselves Mrs. E. Campbell and Mrs. C. Campbell.¹ And if so, mind you explain which married which, for I never can remember. I am very pleased with the plan of giving them a lump present between the four; such a good one as they are 'all in the same boat.'

But I have not yet finished my researches into the family History. You must send me too, Lucy's address and tell me what she wants. I must write to her as I knew her really well in old Hyères days.

We are enjoying ourselves here immensely, but thinking of you and Manenai a great deal and longing for the telegram. This place is delightful and there is also and to wit a delightful man staying at it, 'Gatty' by name, own son of 'Parables from Nature' and own brother to Mrs. 'Jackanapes' Ewing. He is a Catholic in religion and Radical in Politics. But each in a very humane way. He knows Greek Art well, delights in France and Italy and can quote most English Poets and tell amusing stories. Also can he play the piano and the fool. So we, Sibell and I, have tried to 'ketch' him and hope to exhibit him some day 'apprivoisé' at Saughton. He is not hard to tame. I sat up till 3 a.m. talking to him last night.

The sun is shining and the little river in front of the old hall door 'sushing' and gurgling over the brown stones; and the garden is full of phlox and holly-hocks

¹ Two of his cousins Edward and Charles Campbell married two of his cousins Emily and Geraldine Stanford.

and Sibell is looking very well and *very* pretty and sing 'Hey Ho! the Holly! This life is most jolly!'

With my best love to darling Manenai and hopes that she may soon enrich the world.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

126

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, September 7th, 1889.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Arthur's announcement is by far the most important political event of this Parliament. He, of course, made it with a full knowledge of the many and great difficulties which beset the undertaking. Whether he succeeds or not, I am sure he is right to try, and equally sure that he has a better chance of succeeding than anyone has had in the past or is likely to have for some time in the future. It is difficult to explain to anyone who has not been in the House during the last two months the gradual drawing together of all those who care in any way for religious instruction in schools. This drawing together has been caused mainly by the crystallization and establishment upon an independent footing of a purely secular Party, i.e. the New Radicals. And in the second place, by the fact that the Denominationalists think they have now an opportunity of dealing a shrewd blow at their opponents.

Arthur has many elements of strength in the struggle. His own courage, dexterity and absolute pre-eminence in debating power will assist him enormously in a *melée* of this kind, in which the old lines of Party demarcation are blurred. Of the only two men who could be dangerous one, Gladstone, really cannot take any active part in displeasing the Irish bishops and overthrowing a project which was once his own; the other, Chamberlain, has already publicly pledged himself to support the Government out and out in the matter. As to the forces at his command, Arthur can count almost without exception

upon the English Conservatives. No Government has ever been backed as this one has by its followers, and now not only will the Bill be in the hands of the most popular member of the Government, but the regular 'stalwarts' (who voted almost to a man against their convictions on the Tithes Bill) go further than the Government in their wishes to *entrench* Denominational Education by all and any means against the future attacks of the Secularists. They practically *pushed* the Government into passing the Technical Instruction Bill, instead of being led by the latter.

In connection with this I may say that I think you underrate the assistance which we are likely to get from the Irish. The Irish voted and spoke and sat up steadily to enable the Government to carry this Bill against the 'School-board' interest just because it contained a provision for helping Voluntary Schools out of the rates.

It is, I believe, quite true that, as you say, the Irish middle-class do not care exceedingly about getting a University. But here we shall gain by the fact which in the rest of our Irish Policy has told against us—viz: that the Irish Parliamentary Party is really an artificial Party not accurately representing the real wishes of the bulk of Irishmen. The Irish Members depend for their seats not on the men who elect them, but the leaders who nominate them. Now these leaders are hand in glove with the Catholic clergy. The National League, and all the other instruments of the Agitation, are run by the Parnellite leaders in concert with the priests and bishops, from the P. P. who is president of the local branch, up to the Archbishop himself. The Bishops recently passed resolutions asking for a University, and they will see that the members spare no efforts to get it.

As to the Ulster Protestants, their members will, I believe, play the fool. Kane has begun to do so already. But there are only 18 of them, and with the exception of Saunderson, not one to whom the House ever dreams of listening. Saunderson, I expect, will support the Government.

It remains to consider the Liberal Unionists. I confess I think it will be difficult to keep all of them straight, as they cherish the memory of Forster's Education Act, which with the Ballot and a few others is treasured among the proofs that they are truly Liberals. But we have got Chamberlain to help us, and personally I am sanguine of success. I shall certainly study the question carefully and shall like speaking on it.

We are all very well here.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

127

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, September 10th, 1889.

DEAR WILFRID,—I was much pleased with your letter and am glad if my suggestions were of any worth.

I have shut the door on all Politics until the middle of October and am busy upon a poem which sounds dull, but which I hope may be of a little interest. I call it 'Aristodemus.' The story is from Herodotus of a man who practically ran away at Thermopylæ, and then after being 'boycotted' by all his friends, fought better than any and died at Plataea. My poem consists of his dying reflections, with an incidental sketch of the fight at Thermopylæ.

I am afraid I cannot get to London, but—and this is the only important point in my letter—if you only would run down here (only 4 hours from Euston) for a day or two, Sibell and I would be more than delighted. We are alone except that Clifford comes in 10 days' time for a short visit, and that in the first week in October I expect C. Gatty, a Catholic, brother to Mrs. Ewing who wrote 'Jackanapes,' and a very clever and pleasing person.—
Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

I would give you a room to write in, a horse to ride and books to read, and make no claims upon your time.

128

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, September 13th, 1889.

DARLING MAMMA,—We live on pins and needles to hear of Manenai, I hope she feels well.

It was delicious having dear Chang here, though only for a day. We enjoyed her immensely. I cannot judge of her strength but I was distinctly pleased with her appearance. She looked brighter and clearer than for some time and very pretty. Much better I should say, though not strong.

At this moment Sir Augustus and Lady Paget are staying here. Life here and now is very pleasant. I work at 'Aristodemus' every morn—write letters, ride with children and play in the garden all the afternoon and wind up with Boswell's Johnson after dinner. I work slowly at 'Aristodemus' for fear of spoiling him, about 30 new lines a day. Though one morning I put in 56. I think it no worse than my old things and anyhow, whether it is good, bad, or indifferent, I am sure that working steadily at a whole which is rather beyond your power, does your mind and morals a world of good. I have just read Morris' 'House of the Wolfings' quite delightful. It reminded me of you and me when I was very little; as it is very good of a kind you taught me long ago to love. It had, however, one unlucky result of making me dream so hard of battles that I kept Sibell awake the best part of one night. Waking her up from time to time to say 'Thank goodness *you*'re not in the battle.' I kept going back to my dreams, hacking my way with 'Throng—Plow' through mounds of men to the great disorder of the bed and discomfort of my bed-fellow.

Give darling Manenai lots of love from me and bid her be speedy in her business.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

129

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, September 15th, 1889.

DARLING, DARLING, MAMMA,—Hooray!! We are rejoicing with you and beloved Manenai as hard as we can upon a beautiful sunny day. The rebound from the tension of this long week is most exhilarating and delicious. We have been waiting loaded to the muzzle with love and sympathy for you both, and at full cock for a whole week, now the trigger is pulled and I discharge it all in a ringing volley. With three cheers for Madeline Adeane and her daughter. Give my love and deepest congratulations to Charlie. I know how happy he must feel. I drank to Madeline and infant at lunch and shall do so again at dinner.

Once more best love to you all.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—I wrote 70 lines yesterday, pulling up the average to 40 a day for the week.

130

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, September 26th, 1889.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—It is not very easy to send news, as we, since Derwent, have been leading a very quiet life. Breakfast at 9. Read and write in my den from 10 till 2. Ride races on the racecourse with the children from 3 to 5. Newspapers, light books, music, dinner, etc., till bed at 12. This goes on every day and is but little varied even when anyone stays here. Last week Wilfrid Blunt and Clifford spent a few days. Wilfrid wrote poetry all the morn. Rode in the afternoon. I raced him 2 miles over the little jumps and made him very stiff for the rest

of the visit. He won easily on Solyman. With the children the handicapping is done by starts and by my going a longer course into the country and then re-joining the old track and trying to catch them up.

Our bags at Derwent were between 70 and 80 brace a day, with 7 or 8 guns. In one drive the birds came over a brow at a great height. I got 7 there and enjoyed that drive best. 10 birds was the most I got in any drive. I shot better than I expected considering how little practice I get, or rather take, but, of course, not well.

I am paying very little attention to politics, having determined to turn my mind out to grass till October 7th, when I must begin to think again with a view to several speeches. I just glance at the paper and see if there is anything important; if there is, I stuff it unread into a drawer, and mean to read the whole file up at a gulp when the proper time comes. This is, I think, a capital plan. As I find I forget, or at any rate only retain a very hazy impression of speeches and news read idly at odd times. As it is I shall steep myself with the essence of recent Political events just before I have to speak on them.

Meanwhile I only read what amuses me—Poetry, Montaigne's Essays (which I have in a beautiful old calf volume of 1640), Boswell's Johnson, and White's Selborne.

I have at last made myself write out the good things I come across in note-books. But I fear it will be as hard to keep up the practice as it was to begin it. I find the easiest way is to mark the book in pencil as you read it, and then when finished, copy all the marked passages into the note-book. In this way you get the things that really struck or amused you in the first instance.

All my plans (and, indeed, all Arthur B.'s too) have been made to hinge upon the Clouds shooting party. That is the sun of my Political and Social Firmament round which all other dates revolve and take their chance of clashing. I go to Ayrshire on October 14th, speak the 15th and 16th, go to Whittingehame the 17th, and on to

Manchester with Arthur the 19th; after his speech we cross to Ireland. I return on the night of the 28th, speak at Dover on the 29th, and again on November 9th; go to Ipswich November 12th and to you on the 16th. The next week we go to Welbeck. I wonder if you can put in a day or two here on your way to or from Scotland?

Sibell and Perfoo are both very well and look it.

Love to Mamma and Pamela.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

131

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *Sept. 30th, 1889.*

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I was very pleased to get your letter and hope too that we may have many more such meetings. I am persevering with 'Aristodemus,' though I believe you are quite right in thinking his armour handicaps him out of the race. I like to finish anything I begin and believe the exercise and practice in verse-writing is not thrown away. Very few people read 'The Revolt of Islam,' but I daresay, if it had never been written, the stanzas of 'Adonais' would not be such polished gems as they are.

Sibell and I miss you.—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

132

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *October 6th, 1889.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We have been having good fun here this week of the quiet kind with Lady Edmund Talbot and our new friend Gatty in the house. You will see what we have been about if you read the copy I enclose of our joint production. A letter (begun by Gatty, continued and completed by our combined folly)

and sent by him in answer to a portentous effusion on folio paper from Lady Charles Beresford. She was at the 'Derwent' party and was there seized with a great admiration for Gatty and his many accomplishments, and protests that henceforth Society and Racing are to her as nothing in comparison to Literature, Music and Art. Lady E. Talbot is Lady May in the verses, which give a pretty good account of our way of life, but leave out all description of Gatty's music and singing which are both delightful. His lecture on Architecture in the Village school was admirable. The meeting in Chester referred to was the annual *conversazione* of the 'Natural Science Society' founded by Charles Kingsley. With the exception of these two performances and a visit to Hawarden, we filled up all the rest of the time with reading, poetry, talking nonsense, playing the piano and singing. Gatty plays all the old Roman Church music of Palestrina. I forgot to say that we spent the best part of one afternoon, to Sibell's delight, in the Cathedral alone with the Precentor. He and Gatty played the organ which is divided, one part at the side of the nave and one in the screen. They made the two call and answer to each other and combine until it was quite dark. Some of the stops are by Smith as old as 1660, and very strange and mellow.

October 7th.

The Vitelleschis are here for a day or two. He is a member of the Italian Senate, and clever in a slow sort of way. I have just come in from a long walk with him in the course of which I have learnt about ten times as much of the modern history of Italy as in the rest of my life. He, of course, knew most of the actors in it and is really most interesting when he speaks of Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi.

I have to-day begun again at Politics and am pleased to feel my mind very spry and springy after its rest. Randolph's speech at Perth is very good.

If you think our letter amusing, you might send it on to Mary and Guy.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

SAUGHTON,

Oct. 2, 3, 4, 1889

My dear Dot,
 What
 The deuce
 Is the use
 Of your writing a lot
 Of letters to us?
 Who don't care a cuss
 For sending replies
 Because we are wise
 And lie on our backs looking up at the skies:
 Whilst the Dover M.P.
 From eleven to three
 Reads Browning out loud to S., M. and G.
 You must be aware
 That none of us care
 What the Besses and Allsops are doing up there,
 In the intervals rescued from brewing their beer,
 (Which, though good of its kind, is sold rather dear).
 Still,
 With a hearty goodwill
 We thank you for manfully handling your quill,
 And despatching us sheets of all sizes and sorts
 Spotted over with news like a schoolboy with warts.
 Yet you're mad to suppose
 We can care for the woes
 Or the joys of your party,
 Their gossip or clothes,
 Their talk about lingerie, fringes and hose,
 I tell you we spent all last night in the throes
 Produced by a lecture
 Upon Architecture
 By Gatty who fully expounded his shows,
 (Which we hardly could see for the size of his nose)
 Of Temples, Cathedrals and statues 'en poses
 Plastiques,' while his audience sat patient on rows
 Of hard chairs till he brought his remarks to a close
 At ten minutes to ten, (he began them at seven)
 And pouring forth eloquence polished and even
 To furnish the feast at which we all sat, he

Proved there *never* could be a more indefatigable expounder, more easy and chatty,
Instructive and able than Charles Tindal Gatty.

He took us to Athens and then to Pompeii,
To Egypt and Rome, not built in a day ; I
Swore when I saw of such temples the store,
With their capitals, columns, and arches galore,
Plinths, pediments, pedestals, architraves, friezes,
That our buildings at home were no better than cheeses :
But our minds in his hands were so pliant and flabby,
That just when convinced our own churches were
shabby,

He whisked us all back into Westminster Abbey.
I shall, I confess, be surprised if I can't earn
Your praise for his show, when I say without guides
Or 'Murray' we viewed the insides and outsides
Of all the Cathedrals depicted on slides,
Passed cleverly through a large magic lantern,
Engineered by an eminent chemist we trusted
To see that the gas-bags escaped being busted.
—Avoiding this fate and the inner man needing
Refreshment, we went home and all fell to feeding
On oysters and soup to prepare for the reading
Of Browning, who is an astonishing Poet,
Though, probably, none of your brewers may know it,
Unlike Lady May who reads nothing but Jowett,
(The man who translated the writings of Plato)
Till her head is as full as a mealy potato,
Of Socrates, Plutarch, Cambyses and Cato.

Which reminds one of mornings enjoyed up at Derwent,
When for fear of disturbances caused by the servant,

We fled

Up to bed,

Or at least to the spot,

Where, you know, my dear Dot,

That dirty boy Edmund is washed in a pot.

There we sat right in front of a blazing wood fire,
Till the reader grew hotter and, need I say, drier,
And all of the ladies began to perspire
And faint from fatigue till refreshed by the odour
Of whiskey and lemons diluted with soda.

To return now to Saighton from whence we are writing,
 And continue the programme.—The next thing exciting
 Was a drive

Into Chester!! (We reached it alive)
 Though the Fraülein and Parson did almost contrive
 To burst open the 'bus which was packed like a hive.

 Still, we reached the Town Hall,
 And in presence of all,

Were led to a platform where stout, short and tall,
 The good people of Chester in all sorts of guises,
 Were assembled to see Lady Sibell give prizes:

 Whilst her eloquent spouse
 Did his best to arouse

Our yearnings for Science, and brought down the House.

When Sibell had done distributing the prizes,
 We walked round the show to see birds of all sizes,
 Flies, fossils and frogs, and our curious surmises
 At the names of the creatures caused constant surprises,
 Till the climax was reached when Sibell (God bless her!)
 Thought the fossils were marbles of Edward, Confessor,
 And fairly astonished the able Professor.
 We had numerous microscopes ranged out before us,
 Whose learned exhibitors kept up a chorus
 And thought they instructed, (because they could bore us)
 With descriptions of zoophytes wet, soft and porous,
 More monstrous in shape than the old Minotaurus.

—And now we must beg your political pardon
 And take you, in spirit, to tea at Ha-warden,

 Where we all drove to-day

 In the Victori-ā,

 And Sibell with May

 Sat inside the shay

 While the Dover M.P.

 And the gay C. T. G.

Did coachman and footman behind the gee-gee.
 Till we reached where the Old Man was felling a tree,
 And his Lady stood by with a Soda and B,
 To moisten his whistle and keep his mouth cool
 As he preached to George Wyndham on Irish Home Rule.
 (He afterwards lectured on 'Paradise Lost'
 Whilst he swallowed huge sections of hot buttered toast.)

We drove home through Eaton as twilight was falling,
And heard from the Tower the carillon calling
The old Scottish tune whose sad tones of regret
Sing of youth and the friendships it cannot forget,
Of the old merry days that are gone by for ever,
In strains that can never grow stale since they never
Fail to find echoes in hearts the Fates sever.

But, dear Lady, I cannot, I dare not dilate on
The scenes of our very last dinner at Saughton,
We filled up glasses and drank to each other,
And silently struggled our feelings to smother;
We measured the joy of our week with the years
That shall find us apart in this valley of tears,
Where poets, and lecturers, ex-premiers and songs
Cannot give the lost faces for which the heart longs.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, October 20th, 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES GATTY,—I felt impelled to write to you this morning, and should have liked to bring a fresh mind to a joyous task, but owing to the absurd ‘prickings’ that beset me (not towards our Bishop’s suggestion) but to do what appears to be work, I have wasted and jaded myself over a packet of scrawls to low politicians of the baser sort. This and the absurd political experiences I underwent yesterday, have reduced my mind to a state of ‘old December bareness everywhere.’ When we publish our work on the political and social aspect of the middle classes, the events of yesterday will furnish a bulky chapter. A procession in carriages, at a foot’s pace with innumerable halts and eight brass bands, for two hours through the slums of Manchester, all enwrapped and shrouded by a cold coal fog, led to a mass meeting in the gilded hall (the worst for speaking I ever was in) of the Bellevue Gardens, glittering with flashy

decoration and redolent of sawdust and swipes. Here we spoke to the many. Afterwards we dined with the few, or rather the fifty leading supporters of A. J. B., in an atmosphere you could cut with a knife. We wound up with fireworks. The principal effect being an exhibition of the capture of the Bastille, whether as an illustration of what Ireland would come to without Balfour, or a warning of the result of his policy, I did not know.

That I should write about such matters to you only shows 'How like a winter hath my absence been from thee.' Politics and Banquets are a sad substitute for Palestrina and Browning. I forgot to read you 'A Grammarian's Funeral.' You will like it.

How I wish you would come here again on the 30th or 31st. I get back on the former, and my sister, Lady Elcho, will be here.

The day before yesterday, the captain jewel of my carcanet, Froudy, gave us exquisite delight, in which you would have shared. Princess Mary drove over from Eaton; Froudy was seen to leave the room, only to return having donned a high jet and crape bonnet in honour of H.R.H. You may suppose that Sibell and I enjoyed this.

'Perfoo' remembers you still by the name of 'Gacky,' and still appreciates the joke of 'Croöer Perfoo.'

My journey to Ireland is put off till Tuesday; Perfoo refers to it in sad accents: 'No-ō-o-ō Papa, Boat,' or 'Boap,' and seems to know and express all the melancholy emotions, physical and mental, which a departing vessel can inflict upon its human freight.

This letter is to remind you that you are bound by solemn oaths to send me a complete calendar of your engagements, in order that I may bully you into sharing the off-days with me.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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*To Charles T. Gatty*SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, November 6th, 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—You will wonder why I have delayed to answer your letter—not because it did not move me. I nearly sat down at once to say I could not bear the news it contained. Then I waited to think, and to get rid of a lot of harassing work—now I am free to write and have further seen her letter. Still I say after thinking of you and her every day for nearly a week, that I cannot believe in destroying such a lovely possibility. But I know it is no use giving my thoughts to you in this. I know, too, that no man can decide for another what is best. But my heart goes on saying ‘the pity of it’ all day long.

Ought love so strong and sweet to be expended and lost? The ‘*waste*’ in the world; the purposeless decay of lovely things, with nothing effected by their death; dying flowers, falling leaves; ruined works of art, and thoughts that perished even before they blossomed into expression, are to me the very type of the principle of evil in this world.

Don’t you feel that with her love you could do good and lasting work, and live as a light among men?

I won’t say any more of this kind, and you must forgive, if you are angry with me for the things I have already written.

I wish you were here to-day, to walk with us in the ‘happy autumn fields.’ To-day there is silence and such peace everywhere. A few trees still golden, and the sky blue, in calm defiance of Winter’s alarm. I have a lot of work to do, but I sit and stare out of the window at the green meadows kissed by the ‘golden face’ of the sun, already ‘reeling’ from the day with ‘weary car.’ One ploughed field set in their midst, almost the colour of a rich crimson-lake, and beyond a soft blue haze against

the hills—The delight of the eyes is a great deal to me. So many people dream of it no more than the red cow walking in the second green field, who is unconsciously giving me exquisite pleasure as the sun shines on her back.

I belong very much to this world of sense, and hope Blougram is right in thinking this the wisest course. I run no risk of being naked before I reach Timbuctoo.

I missed seeing my Mother here, owing to speeches, etc.; but Sibell tells me she jumped at the idea of your coming to 'Clouds' when we are there. And this is very good news.

Last night I had to take the chair at a lecture on the 'Phonograph.' You would have been amused to see and hear me bellow a quotation from Tennyson into it, in presence of a large audience. Quite the silliest and most ridiculous thing I have as yet been called upon to do. The astonishing life I lead, however, has in all probability even greater surprises in store. I went to Ireland on Thursday week, came back Monday night, spoke Dover Tuesday, came here Wednesday, Diocesan conference Thursday, Phonograph last night, and another meeting to-morrow; Dover Monday, Ipswich Tuesday—ta-ta-ta-ta—that way madness lies.

I am performing in this way with a sore throat, mainly sustained by a liberal diet of jujubes and lozenges.

My friend, I will write no more, though if you were here I would talk with you all day and night,—as you know by experience. Let us meet soon.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
December 14th, 1889.

DARLING MAMMA,—Alas! for Browning. I can't say *how* sorry I am to know I shall never see him again. That evening when he read to you and to me alone will be a very precious memory. I read his early poems aloud to

S. S. in the conservatory all Thursday morning ; and that evening he died ; But I did not know till the next evening at the very moment when his new volume was put into my hands. It is a very splendid way of dying and well worthy of him. The very day after his poems, which are like his old ones, appeared. The last but one, ' Reverie,' sums up all his courageous philosophy and in the very last he describes his own brave self, and gives us all a last cheer as he leaves us.

' One who never turned his back but marched face forward,
 Never doubted clouds would break,
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would
 triumph ;
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
 Sleep to wake.'

His last words are

' Strive and thrive !' cry ' Speed,—fight on, fare ever
 There as here !'

A brave Englishman and a great Poet is gone, and we are very much the poorer for his death.

But if in another life the Spirit still knows of us, think what courage and joy he must get in his new start from all the strong feelings of sympathy and respect and love, escaping from those he has left.

Over the page is a little poem I have written about him—

DEC. 13TH, 1889

On yesterday morning I read
 ' A Death in the Desert ' ; and found
 New strength in the early sound
 Of a voice that to-day is dead :
 New heart in the steady tread
 Of a soldier spurning the ground.

I hold in my hand to-day
 The last words. Once more he saith,
 With his face set hard against Death,
 ' Love reigns beyond Death's array,'
 —Our Captain who led the way ;
 And cried ' Charge ' with his latest breath !

Against Death, against Change, against Doubt,
 In days burthened with doubt and change,
 (Though his keen mind's searching range
 Saw their vantage), he rallied the rout
 To the standard of Hope with his shout
 Of faith, that no wrong could estrange.

This man saw all the world's distress,
 Wondered and shrank from its Wrong,
 Knew fear, though his faith was strong;
 Yet he raised his voice ever to bless
 The great Love his great heart could guess
 And dying drowned Death in his song.

—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

Christmas Eve, 1889.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—A very merry Christmas to you all. We shall drink to you to-night and to-morrow night and wish you all joy. To you I send my 'Wolfings' in memory of our family party. To Pamela a copy of 'Asolando,' dear Browning's last words. The 'Reverie' is well worth reading carefully and there are many other beautiful things in the book. To Guy my present is the loan of my chestnut mare from January 1st to February 1st, and send best love with these little gifts, and also to Papa, Mary and Manenai, to whom I will send presents, if I come across anything they would like in a day or two. I come back from Ireland on February 1st or 3rd, and the week 3rd to 8th is the time so far as I can see when I would like Guy to bring his horses and my mare with them to have a hunt before Parliament meets. If Mary or Manenai or you have no 'Asolando' and want one very much I will see if I can muster another. My love to Hugo and oceans of love to you all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 29th, 1889.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I have taken a big bit of paper so as to copy on the other sheet the old ballad you ask for. We have had a very merry Christmas here, and in consequence I, for one, feel very dissipated and loth to get into harness again; into harness, however I must go, as I have promised to write a political article for the 'New Review,' go to Ireland on Tuesday, and on my return have to speak twice in Manchester and once at Dover. I have so distributed these meetings as to leave myself the week, February 3rd to 10th tolerably clear and have invited Guy formally to bring his hunters at that time. This, then, is to say that we have beds also for you, Pamela and Papa and hope and expect you to come and fill them. I speak on the night of the 3rd but get back from Manchester after the meeting.

Gatty has been here as he will tell you, so that we have been sitting up late reading and scribbling. Hunting all day and reading all night is the way to be healthy, merry and bright. I have sent Guy a short account of the hunt on Friday and refer Papa to him for information. Owing to the covert in which we found and the earth in which we finished not being marked I cannot exactly measure the point; it was not less than eight miles and not more than nine and a half as the crow flies and from twelve to thirteen as we ran it, all grass and fast up to the point where the fox lay down and was viewed in a farm-yard, after about one hour and ten minutes. The scent then failed suddenly as it always does, and the fox managed to crawl away and slip into an earth four fields off where we marked him. Time 1 hour 32 minutes.

He passed through several small coverts without dwelling a moment; with this exception it was all grass save two fields, right across the open country and crossing

the Grafton, Aldersea, and Tattenhall Brooks. My dear Daffodil was none the worse for her exertions.

In the evening I sat up till 20 minutes to three reading aloud with C. T. G. We especially attacked the Latin Hymns of Adam de St. Victor who lived 1130 and was the best mediæval Latin Poet. We managed to translate a hymn to the Virgin, very beautiful in the Latin. The best verse :—

Florens hortus, austro flante,
Porta clausa post et ante
Via viris invia :
Fusa coeli rore tellus,
Fusum Gedeonis Vellus
Deitatis pluvia.

We translated with some success as follows—

Garden where the South wind blows,
Gate on every side kept close,
Path that no man ever trod :
Meadow steeped in golden dew,
Gideon's stainless fleece that drew
Down from Heaven the rain of God.

Sibell has been very busy in the garden planting little apple trees at the end of the lawn and an avenue of limes along the path from the house to the rampart in front of the drawing-room window. They look like little fishing-rods stuck in the grass. I am going to write a sensational tale for 'Blackwood's magazine' called 'THE LIME AVENUE' with a wood-cut showing the Family Ghost pacing along it :— [drawing].

In the background I have introduced for greater effect the immemorial mulberry-tree (planted last year) etched against the waning moon. Best love to you all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

BALLAD OF S.S.S.

All sprinkled with S.S.'s and roses
The S.S.'s you love and I love,
Each of which a sweet meaning discloses
Of sorrow and love interwove.

I send thee the tale of the sorrow
And love of the Knight for his Queen.
For the Queen whose white beauty you borrow,
To dazzle my soul with its sheen.

The first S. the Sign of devotion,
The second the Seal of my love
The third S. the pain and emotion
Of Sorrow our true love to prove.

Though these S.S.'s I love with most fire,
All S.'s for me have a charm,
Saughton, and Sunday, Sapphire
And Saina the mark on thine arm.

Songs, Sonnets and Sunsets around thee
Shower glories of music and light :
Serene light from the Sun shall surround thee
Sinking slowly and softly from sight.

Silvia ! with countless adorers,
Selene ! thou moon soft and bright,
Sophia ! my vain heart no more errs,
Since thy wisdom has shed its fair light.

Sebaste ! O holy one, bless me,
Stephane ! crown my lone heart,
Sphinx ! for a Goddess I guess thee,
Sibell !!! so lovely thou art.

As I have a little more room over, I will put in it the
last verse of our hymn to the Virgin.

Hail ! Thou splendour of the skies,
Pierce the clouds with shining eyes,
Flood the darkness with thy light :
Stay the waves ; star of the sea !
Lest the storm's intensity
Sweep us into endless night.

G. W. C. T. G.

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*To his Father*VICE-REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN, Jan. 12th, 1890.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I thought I had written to thank you for the little pocket-books. They will be very useful to me. I have entered my speeches at Manchester and Dover in them. If you are afraid of Influenza you must burn this letter: I have so far escaped but Dublin, social and political, is well 'en grippe,' as they say in France. The bedroom floor here is a regular hospital. Bendor, I am sorry to say, in one room (Sibell's), then Hilda, Lily's eldest daughter, in the next, and then little George, their youngest boy.¹ The cook and all the maids are in the same case. Whilst from the Castle both the Attorney and Solicitor General are absent in bed. Arthur has followed suit to-day, so that the machine of Coercion threatens to break down. It is very misleading to call it 'Influenza,' as it much more nearly resembles a zymotic disease. They are all very feverish with high temperatures and bad dreams. Hilda last night roused the house with piercing screams; these awoke Bendor, who coughed for an hour; so that Sibell really loses all her sleep. The disease is very interesting regarded as an incident in the conflict of Nature. Here we are, Kings, Empresses, Law Officers, Prime Ministers, etc., etc., all in bed, and some very ill, all over the World, owing to clouds of little animals, for there must be a microbe at the bottom of it, invading the air in a blind effort to get up the ladder of Life. There is revenge, if not redress, for the organisms that have been kept since the beginning of the world at the bottom of the tree. They may have no senses or limbs, but if they kill off a King of Spain, they can set all the cleverest heads thinking, and put armies in motion.

I have 'Solyman' and 'Dick' with me; and hunt once a week on Saturdays. Otherwise I am very busy. Too busy, as I am trying to write an article for the 'New

¹ Lady Zetland and her children.

Review' besides my other work. I shall not attempt this again, as it is nearly impossible to write in broken spells. By the time I have looked up my references, sorted my notes, read the work of the day before, and gnawed off the end of my pen, the two hours or so I can spare are over and I have to scuttle off to the Castle to think and write of other things.

We had a nice gallop last night from 'Turnings.' I saw it well till the last fence, at which I fell and had a long run after my horse, thus getting plenty of air and exercise to last me out the week.

I well remember your talking of Barnes,¹ but never read him until now, with the very greatest pleasure. You must have been very happy at Stanway and Clouds. I hope darling Chang is not worse.

With love to you all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—We have just got some delicious photographs of 'Perfoo.' I had already noticed his likeness to the picture of my Grandmother at '44'; and now one of these would nearly pass for a reproduction of it.

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To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
March 18th, 1890.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I am afraid it will be difficult for me to get away, as an awkward Irish Bill comes on, but let old 'Stop' [a horse of his brother's] be in readiness and, if I can, I will have the ride.

I quite entered into all you feel on Guy's leave being over. I have seen so little of him, and do enjoy being with him so much. But I know we will get him back for Yeomanry, and do believe in people like Guy serving their country. At any rate he is a good specimen of the kingly English race.

I will try hard to get away but shall have to come back the same day.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

¹ The Dorsetshire poet.

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To his Sister, Mary

SAIGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, April 27th, 1890.

MY DARLING CHANG,—I was so glad to read your letter to Sibell, and have been revelling for the last few weeks in the news of your recovery. I have thought of you constantly all through your illness—though I did not write, at first because you were too ill to read, and at last because after a certain amount of absence there is too much to be written, and pent up thoughts and feelings can only escape in speech. I am therefore, not going to write either the one or the other now. This is only a welcome back, to let you know just before you start how eagerly we expect you at the other end of your home-coming. What a lot of leeway we shall have to make up! A long illness like yours is a great experience. So different from ordinary life crowded with excitement and accident, that you will have more that is new to tell me than I, who have known no rest, shall have to give in return. I have always believed in the ‘Cave’ as a regenerator. And imagine Mahomet was better worth meeting when he first emerged, than after his years of fighting and preaching. I hope to have a ‘Cave-time’ myself some day. As it is I have no time to think and very little to read. But I hope to be able this summer to join a little with you in rational life. You are going to take it easy, I have determined to take it a little bit easier, for several reasons. For one thing I suddenly awoke this Easter to the fact that it was ridiculous to waste all one’s youth, all the Spring, all one’s wife’s beauty, all one’s child’s frolic and fun, all the colour and shape and music of life. I became about that time so stale and weary and depressed that being intolerable to self and associates, I popped off at one day’s notice with Papa to Naples and had a good time. Enjoyed being with him enormously, and got re-steeped in the only Styx that does me any good, and having

bathed well in the sun, the loveliness and the memories of Italy have come back as invulnerable as Achilles.

As by hypothesis the excuse for jading your soul with work is that work increases the loveliness of Life; it is absurd so to travail as to forget all loveliness. The world of pens, ink and paper, ugly rooms, exhausted atmospheres, commonplace people and sordid details, is all very well as a forest to go questing in. But you soon become a poor quester if you never go back to Camelot, to sing 'Tirra-lirra' by the river with Sir Launcelot.

At this moment I am singing Tirra-lirra at Saughton, preparatory to more Land Bill in the House to-morrow. And we will sing it together with all the children at the Zoo; and with music and pictures and good books and good company when you come back to your own again.

Arthur's Land Bill advances famously and the enemy have made a very poor show in opposing it. Gatty has postponed his 'Cave,' I am glad to say, and is available for sight-seeing and conversation. If my good resolutions hold out and I manage to reclaim a little time from politics and grubbing, I hope to get him and any kindred spirits I can find to use 35 as a base from which to attack all the statues, casts, Greek vases and cathedrals within easy reach, and a caravanserai where the pilgrims of Beauty may return to tell each other of their faring. I don't think we get half the fun there is to be got out of architecture. You have a fine cellar of pleasure untapped in French Gothic. I hope to get another drink of it at Whitsuntide.

With much love and welcome.—Your loving brother,
GEORGE.

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To Charles T. Gatty

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
20.6.90.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—Do you remember my suggesting to you that you should spend Saturday to Monday, July

5-7, at Crabbet, my cousin Wilfrid Blunt's place? The occasion is a man's party, barring the hostess, Lady Anne Blunt: they meet to play lawn tennis, the piano, the fool, and other instruments of gaiety. To write *bouts rimés*, sonnets, and make sham orations. The club is 'intituled,' as we say here, the 'Crabbet Club,' the rules of which are secret. I may, perhaps, be allowed to betray their character by alluding to one which lays down 'that anyone becoming a Cabinet Minister or a Bishop, ceases *ipso facto* to be a member.' You will find young Radicals and Tories, amateurs of poetry and manly sports. The President presides at Dinner in the costume of an Arab Sheikh, and produces sonnets and shrewd observations on man and nature. The woods grow up in virginal unconsciousness of the axe to the very door. On one side a wilderness sown with Desert plants and dotted with windsown English bushes: on the other a Sussex paddock with Arab brood-mares and their foals. Below in the hollow a pond full of trout, on which the swans sleep and swim lazily through the day. The house is overgrown with June roses and the lawns after dark are very silent and conducive to the complete and satisfactory solution of all problems, moral and aesthetic, by the active brains of young and uninstructed men pacing in the moonlight.

I tried to find you to-day without success, but am writing to say I believe you will come, so please do.—Yours
always,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

A line to 35 on Monday, if you have time.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON,

September 10th, 1890.

DARLING MAMMA,—‘Faith’ and ‘Hope’¹ have arrived. It is too good of you to give them. We are doing up the dining-room with Hollyer's in place of the ‘Stags’ so

¹ Mr. Hollyer's reproductions of Sir Edward Burne-Jones' pictures.

they are of the greatest use and help. In fact I have now enough to cover the walls, your three big ones, 'Seven days,' 'Seasons,' 'Beata Beatrix,' 'Love and Death,' 'Annunciation,' 'Endymion,' 'Pyramus and Thisbe.' I expect dear old Guy is having lovely weather. Let me know all about posts, etc. Is it worth writing to Bombay or straight to Lucknow ?

As we are doing up the dining-room we lunched on the lawn to-day. If you have out the table and chairs on a hot day, close to the house with the servants to wait, it makes a very pleasant and quite tolerable form of picnic. The weather is divine. We breakfast at 8.30. I then read and write all the morning. Lunch with cigar and poetry in the garden, winding up with a ride from 5.45 till dark. I am sorry to give up French hours, but if one must have the English system the only way is to breakfast early and spread the meals by dining late. I can't quite get into the swing of writing verses again as I hoped to do, not having worked out a subject to peg away at. But yesterday I did the enclosed translation of the dear 'Chanson de Fortunio.' I have kept to the rather intricate and dainty metre and fairly close to the French. Pamela ought to sing it in the French of course, which is lovely. You can buy it. Offenbach put it to a very pretty tune when quite a young man. Another instance of the divinity of youth disappearing with age and tom-foolery. In the third stanza I have nearly caught a far-off echo of Herrick, and the last has a cadence very like the French. But Heigho ! my heart is on the sea.¹

Perfoo is delicious : he repeats all the nursery rhymes ; 'Dickery, Dickery, Dock ' being first favourite owing to the dramatic incidents it contains of a mouse running up the clock, and the clock striking while he is in the very act of performing that engaging feat. Perfoo gets even more 'brio' into it than other people by ably transposing some of the words, it runs in his version the 'clock struck one, *down* mouse *run*' which is more emphatic and a far better rhyme than the 'mouse ran down' as the books

¹ His brother sailed for India September 1st.

have it. I think he will be a poet. Best love to all.—
Your very loving son, GEORGE.

CHANSON DE FORTUNIO

I

Name her whom I on boldness bent
Dare to love well?
For kingdoms I could not consent
Her name to tell.

II

Yet each in turn shall sing for praise,
If you think meet,
That I love one with sunnier grace
Than dazzling wheat.

III

I do all things her fantasy
Wills me to do,
And if my life of profit be
I'll give it too.

IV

With such hurt as a love forlorn
 Makes us endure,
 My very soul in me is torn
 Past earthly cure.

V

Yet I dare love whom to proclaim
I love too well,
And I will die for her whose name
I'll never tell.

9th Sept. 1890.

143

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *September 19th, 1890.*

DARLING MAMMA,—I opened your letter to Sibell, who is taking Bendor to school, as I was waiting for one before writing. It is a relief! I really don't know of anything which gives me such a bound of good spirits as the news that

Chang or Manenai are well out of their 'woods.' Kiss darling Manenai for me and tell her how glad she makes us.

The holidays came to a successful end last night with a display of fireworks on the lawn. Percy watched them from Sibell's room, exclaiming 'My dear! Fireworks!' and 'My goodness me!' alternately as each fresh squib went off. Some of his conversations delight me, he scores so brilliantly off anyone who uses baby language or discusses childish themes. The other day Sibell began 'What do you think I saw yesterday, I saw a little Baby.' Percy—(suspicious that some tale bearing on his own conduct is about to be put in this anonymous guise)—'Meaning my?' Sibell—'No not you, a little baby that can't walk.' Percy—'Legs broke off?'

He rode in front of me on Daffodil the other day up and down from the gate to the stables in the wildest delight. It really is rather wonderful that he should not have been afraid as we only hiked him up with the greatest difficulty. But he insisted on being put there.

I sent Pamela two more translations from the French, Villon's rondeau to Death is colossal in ten lines. It is well to remember it for use in argument with the people who mistake photography for Painting and catalogues for Literature. This is *Art*: to take the tiniest metre, generally used for trivial and playful things, and for the very reason that it is so, to show, better than otherwise were possible, the infinite yearning of Love and the stupendous gloom of Death. Death strides about inside those ten lines as if he had all the world to live in. If you know where to put the candle you can throw a large shadow on the sheet.

Mort, j'appelle de ta rigueur,
Qui as ma maîtresse ravie,
Et n'es pas encore assouvie
Se tu ne me tiens en langueur.

Onc puis n'euz force ne vigueur!
Mais que te nuysoit-elle en vie,
Mort?

Deux estions, et n'avions qu'ung cuer,
 S'il est mort force est que devie,
 Voire ou que je vive sans vie,
 Comme les images, par cuer,
 Mort !

' Mais que te nuysoit-elle en vie ? '
Deux estions, et n'avions qu'ung cuer.'

Surely no more need be said about this matter.

Love to all and a double dose of love to Manenai.—
 Your loving son, GEORGE.

144

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
 October 5th, 1890.

DARLING MAMMA,—If you are still at '44' I hope to see you either latish on Tuesday eve. or at breakfast Wednesday morn. Leave me word at 35 if you will be able to feed me at either of these times. I go back Wednesday afternoon.

I send a little lyric for Pamela's guitar. Let me know if you like it. I am glad to have written it as I used to fail altogether when I tried to write anything simple. This is childishly simple, and I think the words here and there sing a little. The first three and last stanzas are the best. You will be able to tell me whether it is simple and musical, or only maudlin and tuny. The limit between the two is narrow. I hope to see Chang if possible but have only a few hours in London and most of them filled.—Your very loving son, GEORGE.

THE DOLL

Ah, who would be a lover
 And live to be beguiled,
 If granted to discover
 The friendship of a child,
 For love may not, if ever lost,
 Be won again at any cost.

And eyes that once delighted
In the laugh of other eyes,
Are dimmed with tears and blighted
By desolate surprise
On finding that they search in vain
To win one look of love again.

For love may last a long time,
And all its joys endure
Through piping days of song-time,
And yet the end is sure,
One summer day the cuckoo bird
Among the woods is no more heard.

But though a child's mere kindness
Rings with a tamer sound,
And fails fast in the blindness
Of absence, ways are found
Soon, when you are no more apart,
Back to her simple loving heart.

So thought I in the sorrow
That comes of being wise,
And fondly hoped to borrow
At least the outward guise
Of love from you, my little friend,
In friendship that should know no end.

To my heart heavy-laden
Your friendship made amends,
For I loved you little maiden
The best of all my friends,
And thought I held the clue of joy
In kindness pure of all alloy.

Then rashly I endeavoured,
(Your wish being overheard),
To fill the gap that severed
Our two hearts' simple chord
With common notes drawn from the boon,
I knew your thoughts were set upon.

You longed to have a dolly
 To cherish as your own,
 And in short-sighted folly,
 So soon as this was known,
 The fairest doll child ever knew
 I hastened to procure for you.

Alas! The spell was broken,
 How woefully I fared.
 I looked up for some token
 Of love as my reward,
 But could not win your eyes to leave
 The gift it was my loss to give.

Our friendship is dismembered,
 I seek and find it not;
 That doll will be remembered
 And I, thy friend, forgot;
 No other thought of me will stay
 When I am dead and you are gray.

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

Oct. 4th, 1890.

145

To his Father

CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
 DUBLIN CASTLE, *October 23rd, 1890.*

MY DEAREST PAPA,—You will be interested to hear that Arthur, Sir West Ridgeway, Miss Balfour and I start to-morrow to the districts threatened with distress in Mayo and the West Coast of Galway. Our plans have been kept absolutely secret and no one will know our intentions till we are well on our way. We shall see the country in a better way than, so far as I know, anyone else has had the opportunity. We start at 7 a.m., and arrive at our destination near Swineford at 11 o'clock and then drive 50 miles. We shall work our way to the Mullett, that curiously shaped peninsula on the N.W. of Co. Mayo, cross to Achill Island in a gun-boat, and return by Galway. We expect to take seven days travelling

with one servant, in a landau and an outside car. We four on the car, and the luggage kept dry in the landau, which we can also use for shelter if the weather is very bad. We hope to see more than Trevelyan who is said to have visited the congested districts in a brougham with the blinds down. I will send you an account of our adventures when we return. We shall pass Athlone in the train on our way back. Tell Mamma, and if she can give me any idea of the direction in which to look for her first home, ask her to write at once addressing the letter, Care of County Inspector, Galway.

On Saturday the hounds met at Saughton at 10 o'clock, and Percy went out hunting for the first time in a chair-saddle on Bendor's pony. He was perfectly delighted. I saw him by the roadside, waving his hand and shouting to the people galloping past him, though his pony was jumping from side to side and jolting him to a jelly. We killed near the Eaton Drive and I blooded him and gave him the brush. He took it home, asked for Smith and said 'Take a brush to Chesty and put on stick, and put my name on it.'

I spoke successfully at Partick on Thursday night, but there is only a short report in the Scotsman which I enclose. The Newcastle speeches, banquets and addresses all went off well. I like being back here, seeing a constant succession of the executive and administrative officers whom we have to defend in England. During our tour we shall call on all the Nationalist Priests, and see for ourselves the things of which we talk all the year round.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

146

To his Sister, Mary

GLENTIES,
Co. DONEGAL, 5.11.90.

MY DARLING CHANG,—Arthur asks me to let you know that he cannot reach Stanway till Tuesday or Wednesday. His thumb, though going on well, cannot yet steer a pen.

Our tour goes on famously, in spite of the anxious efforts of the other side. 'Pongo' Macneil, M.P. for Donegal, travels in front like John the Baptist, to prepare the way; Dalton and O'Hanlon, M.P.s also, bring up the rear to obliterate our tracks. 'Pongo's' voice to-day was, however, only too much that of one crying in the wilderness. He and the curate, having tried to organize an opposition, were plainly told that he would have his windows broken if he meddled with the Railway. He accordingly left this hotel in disgust an hour before we drove up, leaving 8 sheets of comic abuse in a letter on Arthur's dressing table; beginning by a solemn warning that if we persisted in misinterpreting the courtesy of his constituents, they would be driven to show the detestation and abhorrence which they in very truth harbour against us, he passed by an easy transition to a discussion of evictions, battering rams and, as he puts it, other 'features of A.'s administration.' The 'spiteful tyrant' put his prophecies forthwith to the test, held a crowded meeting in the school-house, spoke for 20 minutes amid loud and prolonged cheers which fairly blew the roof off when he announced that the Railway was given for nothing. All the lights of the National League were present, leading the clâque, and our only fear is that since the branch has been suppressed, Arthur will be tried under the Crimes Act for holding an illegal meeting.

Too sleepy to write more.—Your loving brother,

GEORGE.

147

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, *Saturday, November 22nd, 1890.*

DARLING MAMMA,—It is ages since I have written, but until to-day there has been no lull in the particular whirlwind I frequent.

Arthur's speeches at Liverpool were magnificent. Everybody is wild about him. I don't know if you have

followed my movements. I can hardly remember them myself. After returning from Dublin on Sunday 9th, I went to Dover on the 11th and spoke at the Mayor's banquet; gave prizes and spoke at the Dover School of Art on the 12th. I send a very bad report of that speech. Came to Saighton late that night, hunted Friday, and spoke at Tattenhall that evening. To Eserick on Saturday, a nice party—Granbys, Grenfells, Brodricks, and one or two more. On Monday I went to Liverpool, Meeting that night, worked for Arthur and self Tuesday, Mass Meeting in the evening.

Wednesday to Dover, made my speech in the train, let it off with success, and started back at eight on Thursday in time for five o'clock Meeting at Liverpool, then a Banquet, then train back here, arriving at 1.30 in the night, with a whirring head and singing in my ears, from all the dust and glare, and champagne, and speaking and cheering and racketting in trains during this extraordinary week. The life of a regular Politician is becoming a thing by itself. Next day, that is yesterday, I went out hunting, and had a brilliant 25 minutes which blew away all the cobwebs. I had all the luck. Led to a boggy dingle, managed to worry through it with a 'just saved,' got first to the hounds and was only caught by two men just before the check. The great merit of hunting as against all other forms of relaxation is that you lose nothing by want of practice, in fact, I think you gain by being so much more keen than the others who hunt as often as they like. I will send you the reports of the three speeches I have just made, when I get some spare copies. Perfoo is too great a duck, very pleased to see me again and quite at his ease. The other day I dashed in to get some tea between hunting and going off to speak at Tattenhall, and being pre-occupied took no notice of Perfoo. When I left the room, he said to Sibell, 'Papa never said some-sy a me.' Of course I went back and hugged him. He came to dress me last night after hunting and began making conversation. 'I've got hairs on my legs too. Not quite like yours. My hairs are not very black.' He

invents salutations of his own, just before going out this morning, he said to Sibell 'I hope you joy indoors.' I have not been so sleepy as I was after hunting yesterday, since I was in Egypt. I went sound asleep drying after my bath, and again dressing, and again when I was dressed for dinner. I go to London for the opening on Tuesday and hope we may run down and spend a Sunday with you at Clouds. Love to Papa and Pamela.

By the way I looked out particularly for your home at Athlone, and believe it must be the house in which Byrne, the Divisional Commissioner, now lives. He called it 'Old Court.' A high wall round the garden and line of beech trees. You know it was your house that made us find out at the beginning of the tour that they had sent us down the wrong line. Because I had *alone*—on that account—looked well at the map and made out we did not pass Athlone. Then when I saw 'Athlone' on the board I said, 'but we ought not to be here' and no one took much notice until I insisted we were wrong.

Guy's letters are delightful.—Your very loving son,

GEORGE.

148

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 16th, 1890.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We are too sorry to hear of Manenai's illness, I hope she will go on well and that Mamma will not over-tire herself.

Bassetlaw is a great victory. The first time we have hit them between wind and water. I went down and spoke Friday in Retford, Saturday in Worksop. It was more hardly fought even than Eccles and I do not suppose that since the Corn Laws there has been so much excitement, or that any party have ever made such an effort from London as the Home Rulers did. They had the whole of their organisation planted bodily down in Nottinghamshire. From Schnadhorst down to Gatty!!

An Ex-Prime Minister to speak and actually ladies like Lady Spencer who have nothing to do with the place canvassing and, I am told, making the most amazing mis-statements from cottage to cottage.

Waddy and Co. lied as even they have never lied before, and they posted on the walls one libel after another on the Government or on Fred. He says he, with all his experience of contests, has never known any approach to the dirty tricks the other side have used.

He made a splendid fight. I saw him finish on Saturday night, waving the last libel, 'this dirty yellow rag' as he called it in the face of yelling opponents, and 'telling them stra-a-a-ate,' as he says in broad Yorkshire 'what I thot of them.' An increase of over 400 in a constituency with a town like Worksop in it cannot be explained away. I hope and believe it will start a panic among Mr. G.'s followers and lead them to insist on his giving up all further intrigue with the Irish members.

As a matter of fact the Election was largely fought, not on Ireland but on the solid performance and good administration of the Government. Jesse Collings did great service in the villages.

I am enjoying the peace of being here enormously as I was quite tired out at the end of the week. For I travelled all day to Yorkshire and spoke only 15 minutes after arriving at Gilsden cold and hungry on Wednesday.

I travelled across country to Stalybridge where Sib and I opened a Bazaar for the Conservative Club and I made a speech.

Thursday I hunted. Friday to Retford and spoke for over an hour to a crowded audience in the Town Hall. I great success I think the best platform speech I have made. Saturday I had lots to say and expected to speak well, but was, I suppose, too tired, as my brain would not work, and I made a poor, dull speech in my worst style. Such are the ups and downs which one cannot foresee or prevent.

Apart from the Union which this Election will really

help, I am delighted for Fred Milner's sake. He had been staying with us a week or two ago, and I like him immensely. Love to Pamela.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

149

To his Mother

SAIGHTON,
December 20th, 1890.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your telegrams have kept us happy about darling Manenai; I wonder how you are in the beleaguered fortress of Longleat.¹ It is too sad that you should be both shut up at Xmas-time. But barring the sight of your relations and friends you miss very little by keeping indoors this December. It is quite weather for following the advice of the old almanack. 'In December let the kitchen fire be the doctor and a glass of hot nectar thy *bath*.' I am taking it quite easy working slowly at the rate 10 a day through the letters that accumulated during my speechifying. The rest of the day I read in my new study. In the afternoon we all skate at Eaton on the lake. My room is a great pleasure to me, I read and read there, just looking round once in the hour at the clean walls, white book-cases and bright bindings, to go on exhilarated by the cleanliness and colour. In the morning from 10 to 2 I read history, have finished Lecky's new volumes, and am just finishing volume i. of Green's English People, which I have not read since I left Eton. From 10 to 12 at night I read a novel. As I cannot manage new ones I am making a steady onslaught on the old. 'Gil Blas,' 'Sir Charles Grandison' and 'Tom Jones.' I like Gil Blas, and this confirms me in my idea that it is the plot which I so dislike in modern novels. I hate a plot, only wanting to be amused and interested without unravelling conundrums. At odd hours poetry, of course. After dinner I read it to Sibell. Read the 4th Act of 'Antony and Cleopatra'

¹ His sister Madeline had scarlet fever while on a visit at Longleat.

two nights running. It is nearly the finest thing in the world, and can be read in 35 minutes to 40 by itself. I also read to Sibell from 'The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle' a little book of the 15th century by Wynkyn de Worde. It is quite delightful, especially the first six pages, a close argument founded on the parable of 'Salamon' to prove that fysshynge is the proper exercise to secure a 'glad spyryte' and therefore a 'flourynge age, that is a fayre age and a longe.' He reviews and dismisses 'Huntynge, hawkyng and foulunge' as of only secondary excellence. As he puts it. 'The beste to my symple dyscrecon is fysshynge,' 'For huntynge as to myn entente is too laboryous for the hunter must alwaye renne and folowe his houndes—travellynge and sweating full sore. He bloweth till hys lyppes blyster. *And whan he wenyth it be an hare full oft it is an hegge hogge.*'

Mamma! here is all philosophy. The thing we ween to be an hare *full oft it is an hegge hogge!*

Mr. G. for example has long weened Parnell an hare and now finds him an hegge hogge with all his quills bristling. The remedy for all this is to be an angler for, says the author, 'He heareth the melodyous armony of fowles. He seeth the younge swannes; herons; duckes; cotes and many other foules wyth theyr broodes; whyche me seemyth batter than alle the noyse of houndys; the blastes of hornys and the crye foulis that hunters, fawkeners and foulers can make.'

This book was written a few years after the 'le Morte d'Arthur.' Was not the language delicious at that time? Dame Juliana Berners is generally credited with the authorship of the 'treatyse' but it is certain that she at any rate did not write it. The man who did winds up by saying that he has 'compyld it in a greater volume of Heraldry to wit,' lest if it 'were empryntyd allone by itself and put in a lytyll paunflet' it should fall into the hands of 'ydle persones' who would all go a fishing and spoil the sport, so he evidently had a great opinion of his powers of advocacy; imagining, I suppose, that the argument founded on 'Salamon's' parable was so

convincing as to compel every reader of it to whip the water for the rest of 'hys lyffe.'

Good-bye darling Mamma, give mountains of love from Sibell and me to Manenai.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

150

To his Sister, Mary

SAUGHTON,
23.12.90.

MY DARLING CHANG,—This is not a letter, or at any rate not a news-letter, but only a vehicle for carrying my love and good wishes to you on Christmas Day. I saw your letter to Sibell, and though we have Christmas in rather an acute form, both you and I, I still like it and think it does me good. It is quite possible to go through other times without thinking of 'all one's relations and friends,' especially if life is busy. But now it is pleasant to put work aside and dwell on the faces of brother and sisters and to call up old memories of the days when we were laboured for at Christmas as now we toil for little Egos and Perfoos of our own.

Bless you and good luck to you, Darling Chang; give my love to all yours at Stanway.—Ever your loving brother,
GEORGE.

151

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
Xmas Day, 1890.

MOST DARLING MAMMA AND MANENAI,—I must write on Xmas day itself to say how much I think of you. The fact that you and Manenai at Longleat, Papa and Pamela at Clouds are the largest musters this Xmas only makes me feel more how we cling together, and all of us to darling Guy. Though 'seas between us bra'ed hae roar'd, Sin auld lang syne.'

I wish you both a merry Christmas, and hope you are of good cheer.—Your very loving son,
GEORGE.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE

Darling, come with me and behold
Whether the rose I saw unfold
For the new sun her crimson gown,
Has not this evening to lament
The loss of all her red raiment,
And colour lovely as your own.

Ah ! Darling, see how soon she has
Loosed all her treasures on the grass,
Letting them fall on every side !
Nature is well-named step-mother
When such a flower, unloved by her
Lasts but from morn till even-tide !

Therefore, if you believe me, dear,
The while your life may still appear
Clad in the greenest for its dress,
Gather, O gather all your youth :
For age, who showed the rose no ruth
Even so will dim your loveliness.

28.12.90.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

D'UN VANNEUR DE BLÉ AUX VENTS

I

To you, aerial band,
Who fly over the land
With transitory wings,
And whistling on your way
The greenwood shadows sway
In gentle balancings,

II

I give these violets,
These lilies and flow'rets,
And these roses to you,
Roses to wonder on
Being so nearly blown,
And these carnations too.

III

Cool with soft breath this field
 And homestead where I wield
 My fan, so that I may,
 Humming a low refrain,
 Keep winnowing my grain
 Through the white heat of day.

31.12.90.

152

To his Sister, Madeline

MOUNTSTEWART,
 NEWTOWNARDS, CO. DOWN, Jan. 15th, 1891.

DARLING MANENAI,—Will you thank Mamma for her letter. I am glad you both like the translations. I was bothered by the editor of the 'Paternoster' Review to write an article on the Land Bill; as an alternative he asked for a 'poem.' So being too busy to write an article, I sent off those 3 translations and they will appear in the February number. It will be rather amusing to see if any notice is taken of them. Some may say it is 'Nero fiddling while Rome burns' to publish Ronsardist Rhymes at the time of Distress. But the reverse is the case, for I published them to save time which a serious article would have demanded.

We have a large party here for a few days. Edmund Talbots, Zetlands, Hugo and Mary (arrive to-day), Lady Cloncurry, Arthur, Miss Balfour, Osbert and a few more. We shoot to-day, 'enlarge the Book' (i.e. stag-hunt) Saturday and attend point-to-point race Monday. Then back to work. The stag-hunt is, I believe, a sight for Gods; all the County Down farmers drink a bottle of champagne apiece and then ride over each other for the rest of the afternoon. There will be 20,000 at the races to see Arthur and his Ex.

Get quite well soon.—Your very loving brother,

GEORGE.

153

To his Mother

CHIEF SECRETARY'S LODGE,
DUBLIN CASTLE, *January 28th, 1891.*

DARLING MAMMA,—Your letter gave us great joy. It is delightful to think of you back at Clouds and darling Manenai well and able to enjoy life. I am so glad to hear her looks have not suffered. Arthur, Sibell and I cross to-night and shall have a bad passage. A. and I go for Shaw-Lefevre's motion on Friday, but, if we can, return here for one more week's work at the Distress. Things are getting fairly well organized and compared to anything done in past years Arthur's work will stand out well. But you cannot change the raw material, and a certain number of abuses and hitches are to be expected in conducting large schemes in Ireland by the aid of Irishmen.

I suppose the opposition try and make a show of rallying round the old cry of coercion on Morley's motion but so far they seem paralysed by their friend's eccentricities and unable even to obstruct.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

154

To his Aunt, Mrs. Ellis

35 PARK LANE, W.,
February 13th, 1891.

DEAREST AUNT EMILY,—I am glad you liked my translation. Translating, far from tiring me, is rather a rest from politics. I have, for instance, managed one every day this week before déjeuner, or, rather, on four days out of the five. After déjeuner I shut up the Poetry drawer in my head and pull out the Political, in which I grub and burrow for the rest of the day.

I am quite in love with the French XVI century poets, and write to you for any hints upon the best scholarly collections of their work. I am sure you could give me

the names of many books which would help me to make a real study of French lyrical poetry written before Malherbe vint ?

I have been at work on 'French Lyrics selected by Saintsbury,' 'La Lyre Française,' and 'Les Vieux Poètes Français' which you sent me. Is there any larger work written on the lines of the latter with a good glossary and critical notes ?

From the little book you sent I took this week the following sonnet—Du Bellay, p. 24.

If our life is no longer than a day
 In time eternal, if the circling year
 Drives our days from us, not to reappear,
 If birth is but the prelude of decay.
 What think you, Soul, incarcerate in clay ?
 Why are you glad, at our dark daylight here,
 If for the flight to an abode more dear
 Your strong wings are well-feathered to upstay ?
 There, is the good that every mind desires,
 There, rest whereunto the whole world aspires,
 There love is, there of pleasure too full worth :
 There, O my Soul, led on to Heaven's last height,
 The very self of Beauty in thy sight
 Shall seem the image worshipped upon earth.

But of all these some triolets of Charles D'Orléans gave me the greatest pleasure in the doing. I began them in my bath, found these lines as I walked to Victoria Station, and finished the whole as I sat at the board meeting of the L.C. & D.R. directors. Here they are :—

God ! It is well on her to gaze,
 The lovely, delicate and kind !
 For the great joy in her they find,
 All men are quick to sing her praise.

What man could weary of her ways ?
 Her grace each day is new-designed ;
 How well God made her for our gaze,
 The lovely, delicate and kind !

Here or in over-sea journeys,
I call no lady to my mind
So perfect in all sweets combined—
Thought round her in a dream delays :
How well God made her for our gaze !

Do not hurry to answer this, only write if you chance to know of the kind of book I need.

I am so sorry to hear Uncle Charlie has not been well. Please give him my love and to Lucy also. We are now all well, and we get good news in good letters from Guy. He shot four black buck on Christmas day with the rifle I gave him.—Your loving nephew,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

155

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

35 PARK LANE, W.,
February 13, 1891.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I have meant for a week or more to write and let you know that a friend of ours, Lady Edmund Talbot, has left for Cairo on account of her little son, who is delicate.

I spoke to her of your life at Heliopolis and I know that she would be very glad to make your acquaintance. She has within the last 2 or 3 years begun for the first time to take an interest in books, poetry and larger views of life, and you would find in her all the keenness of a beginner.

I promised her I would announce her arrival to you, and both Sibell and I would be glad to think of her finding pleasant companionship in a strange land.

I have, encouraged by you, gone on with my French translations. I enclose one which I sent to a magazine.

Here is another from the xvth century French of Charles D'Orléans. The metre is intricate but I have succeeded in keeping close to the original.

[Poem as in preceding letter.

God! It is well on her to gaze, etc.]

Please give my love to Anne and Judith.

Here in England we are impatient for the 'Love Songs of Proteus.'—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

JEAN PASSERAT

'ODE OF THE FIRST DAY IN MAY'

Let us be quit of bed and sleep

Upon this morn :

For us the Day with vermeil lip

By now is born.

And for the sky is still most gay,

In this fair-natured month of May,

Let us love, Sweet ;

Let us be happy : happiness

In this world is not given unless

By taking it.

Come, lovely one, walk through this brake

And hear the birds

Use the sweet jargonning they make

In place of words.

But, hark ! how though all songsters fail

In sweetness by the nightingale,

He never tires.

Forgetting all dull things and sad,

Then let us in his way be glad :

Time soon expires.

That old winged foe of paramours,

Sweeps in his flight

The best years that we counted ours,

Far out of sight.

When furrows seam your face one day,

Dejectedly, I hear you say :

' I was not wise,

To let the chance it gave me slip

Seeing Time was so soon to strip

Its lovely guise.'

Let us put off till Age's hour
 Such tears and ruth;
 Young, we are bound to pluck the flower
 That crowns our youth.
 And for the sky is still most gay,
 In this fair-natured month of May,
 Let us love, Sweet;
 Let us be happy; happiness
 In this world is not given unless
 By taking it.

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

January 1891.

156

To his Mother

2 SIEGFRIED STRASSE,
 BAYREUTH, August 13th, 1891.

DARLING, DARLING MAMMA,—I write this on the chance of catching you. Would have written before but knew not your address. Well, first a hundred thousand thanks for having got me tickets. It was wonderful of you to take so much trouble, for being here I can estimate how much trouble it was. Life though delightful beyond words on the mental side, is a little difficult as regards the body especially to those who speak no German. You have proved again that after all there is nothing like 'mothers'; no lover for his mistress would have driven about this town digging into people who are too wrapt up in music and too busy in picking up a precarious subsistence at the wretched pot-houses, to care whether others either hear music or procure food.

I must except Mr. Schuster who has been most kind to me. Without him I should have fared badly although I am becoming quite an expert at 'Prodigue.' I and the young lady here die of laughter at our attempts in that line. I hold up a shaving-brush and she dashes off for hot water. She comes back and tries to make me order breakfast. To her unknown tongue I only reply by smirks and civil shrugs of the shoulders till she very

good-naturedly bolts off again and comes back with an egg in her hand, then 'Yah, Yahs,' (the word I know) and laughter again.

Yesterday in the difficult matter of explaining I wanted a bath, she disappeared and, after a little time dragged in by the wrist a giggling English maiden, who said 'They say you can't speak a word, and ask me to tell them what you want.' A bath, etc., etc.

I am very grateful to them all for being amused instead of being cross at all the trouble my ignorance gives them.

I have not written to you about Parsifal as I have just dashed off twelve sides to Sibell, and feel worked out. Ask for the letter or better, wait till we meet and then we'll have it out. The first hearing of Parsifal is really an event in life.

I will take as much care as I can of Chang, but expect it will end in her acting as my interpreter.

Best love to Pamela.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

157

To his Mother

2 SIEGFRIED STRASSE,
BAYREUTH, August 15th, 1891.

DARLING MAMMA,—Here, thanks to you, I am with dear Chang. When I got your three letters together on Monday last, I longed to write frantic thanks but did not know for certain whether you went to Kissengen, nor your address supposing you went, and until I got your letter here, I was not sure of Mary's coming.

I can't say how well and happy I am. I am only fearful that the longing created by the music will remain imperious and demand satisfaction every year. I must bring Sibell and think I shall at once take these rooms, and if possible tickets for the last fortnight next year and chance the Election.

I have written pages of Tannhäuser to Sibell. I believe

I enjoyed it even more than Parsifal. The people here say it was the best performance they have had and certainly I can hardly imagine more perfect acting, stage management, chorus singing and orchestration. The threatening triangle of angry men in the second Act with Elizabeth alone opposing them to save him; her singing at the cross, and slow ascent of the stairs in the last Act, dying with each step; and at last that most lovely in-rush of young fresh pilgrims with the dawn; their clean, clear voices, like the green sky and cold untainted breezes of the morning. It sent the tears tingling to my eyes.

Darling Chang seems very well. They had lost all their luggage, but happily it turned up this morning. We dined late, being an off-night, almost alone at the Theatre Restaurant. Hugo and I walked back and all to bed by eleven! To-day we dine 1.30 at the 'Sonne.' The aspect and ascent of the 'Anker' was enough for me, and I have not dared to face the food of the country in that dingy and odorous hall.

I must slip down to Clouds one day in September whilst we can still bubble over and have it out with you and Pamela, to whom all love.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

158

To his Mother

DERWENT HALL,
SHEFFIELD, August 22nd, 1891.

DARLING MAMMA,—I want to bother you with one other commission, which I think you could do for me while you are in London. I believe I told you that I and two other officers of the Yeomanry were deputed to choose a present for the Duke. In the end my assessors have handed over the whole matter to me agreeing to my suggestion that a blotting-book should be given with a silver plaque bearing a beaten device on the front, and a smooth silver plaque for facsimile autographs on the back;

to cost about £50 or £60 or more if necessary. Nobody but you can do this. The Regiment is 'The Earl of Chester's Yeomanry Cavalry.' Will you set Child to work on it for me?

I got here for breakfast on Wednesday morning. Sibell is resting in bed with nothing much the matter with her.

Best love to you and all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

159

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, August 29th, 1891.

DARLING MAMMA,—I write on my birthday to thank you for your letter. I think the alternate squares of silver and shagreen *splendid*. Am almost disposed to think the Durer 'Knight' or the Giorgione 'Knight' from the Arundel, better than a confused battle-piece. It must on *no account* be religious or symbolic. If it were I should be held to have betrayed the trust placed in me by honest Yeoman who by no means wish to be precious or æsthetic. I only wish the thing not to be impossibly common-place and at the same time to lure them to believe that it is an ordinary testimonial.

Thank darling Pamela for her letter. If you collect some photographs of knights and battles we could fix on one when I come to Clouds.

When do the Bayreuthers go there?—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

160

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
October 7th, 1891.

MY DARLING MAMMA,—I know of no print or drawing. If I hear of one I will send it. The dress is dark blue tunic with five silver cords across the breast. Red collar

and cuffs, dark blue pants with two white stripes at the side, black sword sling and sabretache (from under tunic) with the silver crest I sent you upon it. Fur busby of Jennet, with tall white plume.

I enclose reports of my 'Conversazione' and 'Manchester' speeches.

I go to Scotland on Monday for speeches and put up with your friend Lady Campbell of Blythswood.

Poor W. H. Smith! I am so sorry that he did not retire in time to enjoy a little rest and dignity. There will be the Devil to pay in settling on his successor.

I am very sorry. He was always most kind to me.—
Your loving son, GEORGE.

161

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 23rd, 1891.

DARLING, DARLING MAMMA,—This is only a line of love to you and Papa to say we are all well and happy and wishing you all good luck this first Xmas since the fire. We will drink to your healths on Friday night.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

162

To his Sister, Madeline

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, Christmas Eve, 1891.

MY DARLING MANENAI,—I wish you and Charlie a very merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I think so much of you and Chang and dear old Guy and Pamela and Mamma and Papa when Christmas comes round. I seem to be dreaming when I find myself getting up Christmas fun for Perfoo, and thinking of you and Chang doing the same for your children; and I expect every moment to wake up with you all, children together again, at Wilbury. No wonder Christmas Eve was famous of old for ghosts.

The whole house is full of them ; on this general resurrection and ' Last Day ' of all our buried childhoods.

I send a tiny gift, the trial and death of Socrates.—Ever
your most loving brother, GEORGE.

163

To his Sister, Mary

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *Christmas Eve*, 1891.

MY DARLING CHANG,—I send you Christmas greetings laden with love. I find Christmas means more and more, now that we are all scattered. Have been thinking of this just now as I wrote to dear old Guy. I used to be a heretic in old days at Wilbury and found Christmas somewhat of a weariness. You were always orthodox to the last minutiae of mince pies and mistletoe. I now see that you were right. As I grow wiser I believe from conviction more and more in custom ; less and less in conscious effort. To try and think, feel or act as we ought upon every fresh occasion for thought, feeling and action, is to begin building anew from the foundation every time you need a house. Give me custom to clamp together the loose spars littered in our hearts and minds. In this way we get better than a house ; a tower rising tier on tier until at last we scale the Heavens, which none ever reached by attempting flight without wings. This kind of flying is not to be distinguished from the tumbling of a clown, and I'll have no more of it. I will go on steadily clamping log after log on to the old pile of memory till my forehead strikes the stars. So now I am setting to work to bind the green garlands with my own hands in honour of the good old days when you and Guy and I were all together.

I saw photographs of Ego and Guy the other day, what dears they look. I should like to see more of them.—
Ever your most loving brother, GEORGE.

Give all good wishes to Hugo.

164

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
New Year's Eve, 1891.

DARLING MAMMA,—What a relief it is to have better news of Minnie Brooke¹ in time for the mail. Don't you think a typhoid expert should now be called in? Collins is always ready to call in a specialist and should be asked to do so.

We got such a bad telegram yesterday that we feared the worst news at any moment. But, thank God, things now seem better. I keep thinking of darling old Guy all the time.

Well, with a lighter heart, I wish you all at Clouds a really Happy New year. Thank Pamela very much for the scent-bag.

We are all well here. I have just come in from a splendid day's sport, also had one yesterday, and hunt to-morrow and next day, quite like old times to be out four days running.

It makes me so well and happy to take my old liver along with me over the country. We get quite on friendly terms after a few gallops together.

Please ask Pamela for full true and particular account of the acting, marred by no modesty or good nature.

Love to all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

165

To his Mother

VICE-REGAL LODGE,
DUBLIN, January 14th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I found your letter on my return here to-night. I had popped over for the day to see little darling Perfoo and to settle Sibell's plans. I did not think him well yesterday, having a horror of that wheeze to which we listened in dear old Guy's chest the evening after he came down for the first time at the 'cottage' (was it

¹ His brother was married to Mrs. Brooke the following year.

called ?) Hoddesdon. Do you remember ? when we spent weeks in eating tea and toast, being sick, and cutting out the characters of Hamlet.

This morning he was much better, and your parcel of many coloured crackers and toys filled him with delight. I settled that his illness, the snow, etc., were reasons and to spare against Sibell coming back with me.

But the terrible tragedy at Sandringham has, of course, led to the abandonment of the Ulster meetings, and will probably put an end to the Castle season. I should have loved to visit Athlone with you but fear that is not possible this year.

Probably I shall take the children back to Saughton Saturday or Monday.

All the guards and porters along the line were cast down by the sad news, came up to me and spoke about it, and seemed to think of nothing else. Poor Princess May.—
Your very loving son, GEORGE.

166

To his Mother

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
January 19th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I am so sorry to hear this terrible news of Lady Alice.¹ I know how deeply you must feel it. What a sad winter it is.

Little Percy is very cheery, but his lung is still congested. I have to speak somewhere in the Rossendale Division on Thursday. A great bore just as I get home to play till the House sits. I refused at first but was pressed, and of course, had to go. It is no use talking of fighting unless one is ready to take a turn in the trenches.

Give much love to Pamela and say that the sad death of Prince Eddy and Perfoo's illness, made me miss her birthday. I ran over for a day and in the skurry it slipped by. But I am thinking of her now and wishing her well 'all the time.'

¹ Lady Alice Gaisford.

It is dear old Guy's birthday to-day. I hope you have wired to him about Minnie, as our letters will reach him now.—Your most loving son,
 GEORGE.

167

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 January 23rd, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I return Guy's precious letter.

I am just back from Rossendale, spoke Thursday at Rawtenstall, and last night at Haslingden. It has been the most desperate contest ever remembered even in Lancashire, and if we win, the Radicals will wreck the place. We hope just to win by 150 or 200 votes.

Oddly enough three persons, self being one, have dreamed that we win by 540. Or to be precise I dreamt 543 and could not see the last figures distinctly but knew they were between 30 and 50 and think they were 535. I dreamt this last Monday, so was surprised when yesterday our candidate Sir T. Brooks opened before me and read out an anonymous letter, the writer of which said he had dreamt of a victory of 540. Struck by the coincidence I told it to my host, Mr. Hardman, who said, 'Why I dreamt last night that we won by 540.' I put this down just for fun and post before the Poll is over. If by a miracle, the result follows the dreamers of dreams it will be the most astounding quadruple coincidence in the spheres both of thought and fact I have heard of.—Your very loving son,
 GEORGE.

168

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, January 28th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I am so glad poor Lady 'Allus'¹ passed away happily and without pain. She has made

¹ Lady Alice Gaisford.

me one of her executors. When I think of all her fun, 'Pink Zammie' and great love of you, and early days, I feel as if the Isel and Wilbury life had been shifted back further into the enchanted land of memory and imagination. But in that land it goes on *for ever*, keeping *all* the friends who made it what it was. It is strange to find a part of one's own real life becoming a 'Myth' before one's very eyes.

And now, Darling Mamma, you must come *here*, to be sure of *me* well before the 8th February, on which day I too probably must go up for the session. Thursday night the 4th I shall be away, so come over at any rate on Friday 5th, and have a good Sunday here.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

169

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, March 10, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I have accidently destroyed the envelope of Guy's letter. I am very sorry, but as it is dated the loss is not serious.

It is very splendid of him to take the adjutancy and forego the chance of long leave for another two years, and none the less so because the present denial will probably prove most convenient for him in the end. The time for him will race by with so many duties to fill his mind ; he will have a good *solid sample* of Indian soldiering to look back on ; and with any luck ought to contrive by leave, Depôt, Staff College or Yeomanry adjutancy to avoid ever going back. Let me know at once any definite news of the date of his arrival. I hope he will get away for all the hot weather and only return for the drill season.

You will wonder why I am here. I came to speak last night at Tarporley which I did ; and in the hope of hunting to-day which I didn't. I might have tried to exchange my pair and go back but, having on me the remains of a chill caught suddenly last Friday, I thought I would

use to-day and to-morrow in throwing it off. I am sure that colds are, in nearly all cases, the direct result of fatigue. After speaking in the House Wednesday and Thursday last week, which always tires me out with sheer and mere *funking*, and a good deal to do besides, I felt quite beat on Friday but pleased to have no sign of neuralgia or cold or any other ailment. Suddenly at five o'clock in the afternoon I was seized with violent neuralgia in my eyes and nose, the inside of which became almost inflamed with sensitiveness, then frantic sneezing, and since then the continual and enchanting exercise of blowing that organ morning, noon and night. I managed to pull through with three-quarters of an hour in the Townhall at Tarporley, and then drove here, arriving at midnight. So to bed where I slept like the just till 10.30 this morning.

On Saturday Sibell and I return to London and dine that night with Arthur to meet Lord Salisbury and Chamberlain;—like two little flies crawling about the mainspring of the political machine.

On Wednesday 16th I have a big meeting of my electors in the Town-Hall at Dover, and on Wednesday 23rd a Dinner at Portsmouth. On April 9th, the House of Commons Point-to-Point. On the 11th, a Dinner at Dover. That takes me to within two days of the Easter holidays. And as to them, I feel rather a broken reed; for at one time I think I hinted at going to you. But we have here a whole week's point-to-point racing and steeple-chasing. The Tarporley chases, Bangor chases, Tarporley Hunt Point-to-Point, and one between the Yeomanry and the 12th Lancers. Also the Duke means to invite Mr. Peel, who has a scratch pack on the hills, to hunt foxes on the quiet at Eaton. As I have horses to ride I think it would be a mistake not to take ten days in the saddle especially as nothing else makes me feel really fit and well.

The Coldstream also are, I believe, going to have their Point-to-Point at Cholmondeley. So you see, I can hardly be away. When I get the exact dates I will send them

and of course if you or Pamela or Papa or all like to come we shall be quite delighted. After Easter I would spend a Sunday or two with you at Clouds.

Perfoo is in the room and sends his love to Gan Gan. Now as to him I do not think it would be wise to let him travel till the weather *changes and settles*. Then he shall pay a formal visit.

Sibell who, as I said, accompanies me to London on Saturday the 12th, will stay there until after the 29th, on which day we dine with Ferdy Rothschild to meet Mr. Gladstone.

I have given you, now, all our *fixed* plans so that you may not miss us, if by any chance, you are for a day in town, and so that you may publish them to Chang and Manenai, if either of them are up. I wonder if Chang would like to come here for Easter to ride Daffodil or my new Grey?

After to-day and to-morrow I must stick to it in the House as I do not like to be away from Arthur during this phase of foolish criticism on his leadership. The difficulty is that whereas their generals run away from the men; our men run away from their generals.

The prospects for the General Election are on the whole, encouraging. Three general scrutinies of the whole country by independent parties, one of each side, and one professedly impartial, go to show that there are about 95 doubtful seats. If Gladstone wins them all he will have a majority of 69. If we win half we secure a majority of twenty-one. I think he will win a good many more than half and have a majority of forty to sixty. In which case I shall say with Cromwell 'the Lord has delivered him into our hands.' For to pass Home Rule in the face of Irish distrust, and English hatred, with less than 120 at the start, is, I believe, outside the possibilities of parliamentary strategy. Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

170

*To his Father*GROSVENOR HOTEL,
CHESTER, May 22, '92.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I liked getting your letter. Until I went up to the Ladies' Gallery late on Thursday night, I had no idea that you had listened to my speech. When I sat down I felt I had completely failed ; but came round to the view you put in your letter. In some ways I have been encouraged by the experience ; for I am certain that two years, or even one year ago I could not have kept on *at all* to such a listless audience. On every former occasion of my speaking in the House I have taken a subject and a line popular with some at any rate of our men, and arousing brisk opposition among the enemy. On Thursday nobody cared much for our Bill, or a damn about Sexton's attack on it ; and the line I took, viz. : of trying to throw high lights on the magnitude of the reform, and of impeaching the ' bona fides ' of its opponents, was not the kind to elicit cheers from below the gangway. I might have got them had I cared to engage in a blood and thunder oration on the woes of Irish minorities. But that part of our case, important though it is, has been dwelt on quite enough ; in fact, it has been over-emphasized to the prejudice of the real breadth of the scheme as a whole.

I do not think that Lord Salisbury was ' electioneering ' at Hastings. He is sincerely dismayed at the recent development of Tariff walls round every other State. If you look back at his speeches you will find that he has sounded a note of alarm more than once in the last two years. Several of our Commercial Treaties have come to an end, and unless we can bring some pressure to bear on foreign countries, he seems to believe that they will not care to enter into any fresh ones. Nor can I see why they should.

Whether he considers ' Protection ' *proper*, i.e. the

imposition of duties to foster and develop your own industries, sound under certain circumstances, I do not know. He confines himself to the only proposition of practical interest, viz. : that in the present state of public opinion it is impossible.

But being a man of courage he has not funk'd stating the obvious truth, that in face of a combined attack on British Commerce, conducted by the imposition of prohibitive duties by every other Government, those of our own Colonies included, it is necessary, at least, to reserve the right of 'Retaliation,' and to express the intention of using it if we fail to obtain some consideration by diplomatic pressure. He points out, in fact, that diplomatic pressure is impossible without some 'ultima ratio' of a disagreeable kind behind it.

In old days it was War or Privateering, to induce others to desist from such operations, or to think twice before taking to them. The Mackinley Tariff is a perfect modern equivalent, to Spain's claim in the 16th century to the Spanish Main and all the Indies. Elizabeth met that by encouraging Drake and his companions to cross 'the Line,' and plunder Philip's ships. Unless we are willing to meet the modern equivalent, with a modern rejoinder, we must ultimately starve.

I have thought that a good speech might be made on this subject, starting with the 'Eight hours Bill.' The theory of that measure is unassailable so long as you exclude foreign competition from the problem. When this is urged its advocates reply, 'Oh, but the movement is to be international; the workmen in all countries will struggle for shorter hours irrespective of possible loss to National Trades.' I think they might do so, but the *intense popularity* of Protection in every other country shows exactly how far such international sympathy would go. Foreign workmen may co-operate with our workmen to gain a boon for themselves which they could not get so long as our hands are free. But having tied them, you have only to glance at recent French and American Protective Laws to see that they would redouble

their attacks on our commerce with a far better chance of success. The man who believes that the American artisan or the French small proprietor will ever give up Protection so long as it makes the first rich, and saves the second from starvation, is unfit for Public Life.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

171

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, July 15th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—Here we are at ‘Rest and be thankful.’ The silence is profound and delicious; the whole place sunk in deep sleep. But my head is still haunted with ghastly cheering and booing and the ceaseless rattling of the train.

I enclose a diary of my last three weeks in which I have travelled hundreds of miles and delivered fifteen set speeches, besides the little ones. I am pleased to find myself perfectly well and fit at the end of it all, pulling up fresher than when half way round the course.

I found darling little Percy here in his most delightful mood. When he kissed us, Sibell asked him a question, which he did not answer saying, ‘First I have some *joysome* news to tell, there are pansies growing in my own garden.’

He then took my finger and showed me all over the place. During our stroll we had occasion to smack ‘Tib’ for catching a thrush under the gooseberry nets. Percy eyed him curiously for a minute afterwards and then said ‘I’m sure he’s sorry because he ‘adn’t curled his tail right up to the top.’ He then took me into the field to see the hunters. They all knew me and came of their own accord to be patted and to rub their noses on my shoulder. Percy’s confidence with horses is wonderful, for beyond holding my finger a little tighter he showed no uneasiness when these five loose horses and a pony were snuffing at us and nearly eating his straw hat.

I am afraid I shall, after all, have to give up Bayreuth since Lord Salisbury is almost certain to meet Parliament. The 'Old Man' will then have to come on and show what he is made of. If this happens we shall have a most interesting debate in August which I could not miss or any part of it.

I think it more than likely that he will be able to convince the M'Carthyites that Home Rule is impossible at this moment, that with their co-operation he will go in for 'Registration' and 'One man one vote' trying to turn us out on the latter, and having succeeded (if he does succeed!) will then bring on 'Home Rule' in eighteen months' time, get it rejected by the Lords and then dissolve with the advantage of a new franchise and a pumped up agitation against the Upper House.

It will be for us to 'spoil his little game' and the sport promises to be of the best.

I am reading 'Heims Kringla,' Snowe Sturlason's Chronicle of the Norse Kings written early in the 13th century. It gives a refreshing contrast to modern politics.

With best love to all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

	22. Wednesday.	London to Dover.	. . . . .	<i>Speech at Banquet.</i>
	23. Thursday.	Dover to Birmingham.	. . . . .	<i>Speech, Town Hall.</i>
	24. Friday.	Birmingham to Battersea.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	25. Saturday.	London to Southampton.	. . . . .
	26. Sunday.			
	27. Monday.	Southampton to Dover.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	28. Tuesday.	. . . . .	" . . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	29. Wednesday.	. . . . .	" . . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	30. Thursday.	. . . . .	" . . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
July	1. Friday.	. . . . .	" . . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	2. Saturday.	. . . . .	" . . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	3. Sunday.			
	4. Monday.	. . . . .	duly elected.	
	5. Tuesday.	Dover to Portsmouth.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	6. Wednesday.	Portsmouth to Worksop.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	7. Thursday.	Worksop to Farnham and back to London.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	8. Friday.	London to Dublin.	. . . . .
	9. Saturday.	. . . . .	Hilda's Wedding.	
	10. Sunday.	Dublin to London.	. . . . .
	11. Monday.	London to Bourne.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	12. Tuesday.	Bourne to Ashford.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	13. Wednesday.	Ashford to Lichfield.	. . . . .	<i>Speech.</i>
	14. Thursday.	Lichfield to Chester, Voted for Tollemache.		
			2,476 miles.	

CHAPTER VI

JULY 1892 TO MAY 1895

In Opposition—Bayreuth—Translations from French Poets—Death of his Nephew, Colin Charteris—‘The Poetry of the Prison’—‘Introduction’ to North’s Plutarch.

172

To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

CLIVEDEN,
MAIDENHEAD, July 21, '92.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I am here resting after the General Election. During a 3 weeks' campaign throughout the length and breadth of the land I travelled 2476 miles and delivered 16 set speeches besides a number of short ones.

During all those weary hours Crabbet was my ‘beaconing’ star. I wrote my competition poem¹ yesterday, also the enclosed sonnet which slipped out by accident.

¹ In the early seventies Lord Pembroke and his brother instituted an annual gathering of friends at Wilton. These gatherings of what they termed the Waggon Club were of the nature of cricket weeks. By degrees the meetings were transferred to Crabbet or at any rate one of the meetings was held there each summer and thus the Crabbet Club was formed. The following account is taken from a letter from Mr. Wilfrid Blunt.

‘The meetings were athletic not intellectual—cricket and lawn tennis (then in the process of invention). This went on for the best part of a dozen years, the regular frequenters being Sidney and Bungo Herbert, Eddy Hamilton, Lewis-ham, Granny Farquhar, Bathurst and one or two others of the Wilton lot, with friends of my own, Godfrey Webb, Walter Seymour, Nigel Kingscote (junior), Mark Napier, Harry Brand, Frank Lascelles, Mallock, Frederick Locker, Algernon Bourke, my brother-in-law Wentworth, Ebrington, Portsmouth, Elcho.

My political vagaries however in the eighties, Egypt and Ireland, gradually weeded out most of them, and the connection with Wilton did not survive my imprisonment in Galway gaol.

In 1888 the Club was reconstituted on a new basis with a small number of younger men, undergraduates from Oxford and Cambridge, Willy and George

I have read 'Esther' through twice. It is *very* good and *most interesting*. But in the later sonnets there are a certain number of lines the rhythm of which is too broken to please my ear.

The poem is so important that I hope you will re-write some of these lines.

The prologue I., II. and III. is amusing, the best things you have ever done, and in these all the lines run deliciously.

In II., line 10, I should like 'twixt day and night'; all through the sonnet you are contrasting, youth and age, love unreturned and love deceived, and immediately afterwards you go on to 'the sun has its own sorrow.' A splendid bit.

VIII., 11 and 12. I do not like '*some*' in both lines.

The 'Idol Feast' is capital and must be retained, but I do not like the line.

XIII. The rhythm of these lines is quite beautiful; 'It should have known and suffered and been loved' fills me with delight; it may be compared to your 'only more dear for her deliverance' in Natalia. But with these

Peel, Arthur Pollen, Leo Maxse, Percy C. Wyndham (Hugh's son), Charles Russell, Herbert Vivian, Theobald Matthew, Morpeth, Hubert and Esme Howard, St. George Lane Fox, all clever young fellows who gave the Club its first intellectual tone. We continued to have lawn tennis tournaments, but we also had poetry competitions (the first in 1888) with a poet laureate.

George Wyndham came into this in 1889 and, seeing in it great possibilities of amusement of the kind which specially delighted him, brought with him half a dozen of his political and other friends, George Curzon, Harry Cust, George Leveson-Gower, Cairns, Loulou Harcourt, Houghton, Charles Gatty, Dick Grosvenor, Eddy Tennant, Lawrence Currie and Basil Blackwood. Most of them have made names for themselves in after life.

As a convivial institution the Club was, thanks mainly to George, an immense success. Its annual meeting was held on or about the first Saturday to Monday of July each year at Crabbet and the sittings after dinner, embellished with speeches and recitations, lasted both evenings till long past midnight. Nothing, I fancy, has ever been much better of its kind, and the 'Poetry of the Crabbet Club' survives in testimony of the high calibre of its verse. The volume will be published, perhaps, some day as a literary curiosity but must remain for the present private.

The Club came to an end when I left Crabbet to live at Newbuildings in 1895. Things of the kind do not last for ever—it had served its purpose of amusement. Its last meeting was as brilliant as any had been, but Crabbet was let and no longer available and, though often talked of, the meetings were not renewed elsewhere.

smooth and liquid lines you cannot have one or two which I will now mention.

Before leaving XIII., would not 'daring' be better in l. 12. You have courage in 10.

In XIV. I should prefer '*knew*' to 'know' in l. 9.

Now for the lines I dislike.

XVII., 2. A person reading this for the first time might fail to scan it. The stress on 'the' is impossible. Could you not put something like 'Nor did the earth gape open at our feet.'

Line 7 is too abrupt and rugged to please my ear after the smoothness of the earlier sonnets. 'Who held me still' is very weak instead of 'who clung to me still,' but I do not like 'to me still' as a foot. Why not 'who still clung to me' and then alter the rest.

XX. I like this sonnet enormously.

XXV., line 8, 'its first doom.' I do not like this. It is not 'inevitable.' I should like you to re-write the middle of this sonnet.

Also '*rest*' does not rhyme with 'wickedness.' Could you not get 'dome' for 'doom' and a full stop after it.

XXVII., l. 1, dream does not rhyme with l. 3, unborn. Would 'At such a time youth's very self is torn' do?

XXXI., last line. I cannot scan this. It spoils a beautiful piece of work. Is 'Gallio' necessary?

Would 'Seeing and caring nothing for these things' do?

XXXIII., 10. 'Came the little woman I had seen at the Fair.'

'Outstepped my little woman of the Fair,' or something that does not break the swing of the rhythm.

l. 14, 'line on line?'

XXXV., l. 13. I do not like the rhythm.

XXXVII., 6 and 7. Here again it is very difficult to scan the lines. They bring the reader up to a full stop.

XLVII., l. 9. Do not like stress on 'from.'

LIII. Now the smooth running of this sonnet is delightful and perfect. Yet it here serves to make the lines I have noticed more annoying.

From here to the end it is all *capital*, especially the last 2 sonnets.

The whole is, as I have said, most interesting, and graphic and true, the beginning and the end singing themselves to liquid tunes. But in the central sonnets where dialogue is introduced, and elsewhere, there are one or 2 lines, which I have noticed, the short and halting metre of which snaps the current of pleasure in reading the whole Poem through.

When once the music of verse has lulled me into dreamy half-consciousness, I hate being awakened till the poem is over.

I have shot all this down very hurriedly and may be quite wrong.

You will see a case of champagne arrive at Crabbet for thirsty Poets.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

MARRIAGE

A Marriage 'is a moment's monument.'

Once in our lives we see all Loveliness

Revealed: once in our lives, we cease to guess

At the World's riddle, knowing its plain intent,

And it is much to know that we were meant

For everlasting life and happiness;

Much though the long sad labour to express

The lightening thought brings doubt and discontent.

To have known it once and so to take our part

With the great masters who have left behind

No brilliant examples of their Art;

But one vast work, unfinished and unsigned,

That should have told the secret of their heart,

And tells of hands grown old and eyes worn blind.

July 20, '92.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, August 25th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—Here I am at last. We made a most prosperous journey and I am none the worse for it.

My complete collapse at Bayreuth was against all my principles which lay down that there are occasions upon which all persons are bound to be well. But I burst up completely. This, at any rate, was better than being left in doubt whether I could manage the performances or not. We arrived on Sunday night, I saw Parsifal Monday but as it went on felt weaker and weaker and too tired to drag one leg after the other ; developed a sore throat ; and after an hour's sleep woke in high fever with racking pains in every bone and throat nearly closed up. So I tossed on a German bed a foot too short all Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Crawled to Tristran on Saturday and was amply recompensed for all. There is nothing like Sucher in the last Act. I consider those last twenty minutes as the most important thing of our time.

Parsifal again on Sunday and to Nuremberg that night ; on to Mayence Monday, Mayence to Cologne on a steamer Tuesday, taking the night train and arriving Dover, Wednesday morning. Here yesterday. I shall be well in a week but am rather a poor thing just now without a pulse. I found a sharp little Doctor called Gage-Brown who has given me a virulent tonic that ought to screw up my slack strings to concert pitch in a very few days. Iron, Phosphones, Arsenic and Strychnine are some among its many poisonous ingredients.

I do not mean to move an inch till I am quite well and am devoting myself to health and nothing else. He expects me to eat raw-beef !

Bid me to drink, and I will drink the tonic given me,

Bid me to eat and I will dare to eat raw beef for Tea !

As Herrick would have sung it. I will eat and drink anything, ' esil ' included, but at any cost I am determined to be not only strong but *strung*, before the next round of Politics in the Autumn.

I hope to come to Clouds in about 16 days or three weeks. Ask Papa if he has got ' An Englishman in Paris ' if not I will bring it with me. The best book of gossip we have had for years—with the additional zest of unknown authorship.

Sir Richard Wallace, heir of Lord Hertford, is supposed to have written the notes, which are now edited anonymously.

One incident at Bayreuth cheered me up as I started for Tristan. Sibell otherwise perfect at every point, has a habit of buzzing round the room before making a start for any important expedition—putting things in their places and collecting a mass of small objects, gloves, writing paper, book of the words, visiting cards, pocket-handkerchief, veil, smelling-salts, fan, parasol, gingerbread nuts etc. etc. I am so used to this that I now bear it quite philosophically and after it had been in full swing for some minutes, potted on to wait in the fly until it was over and we could start.

In due time Sibell arrived and we started. But in a moment her face assumed an expression of horror and shouting to the driver to stop she bounded out and was back again in the house. I, naturally, thought the collection was not complete and lacked a pair of scissors or a lamp-shade. But it was not so. It was the other way. The collection contained an unnecessary article. In obeying this strange instinct, planted in her breast by an all-wise Providence Sibell had caught up and was starting for our promenade holding in one hand a pair of my linen drawers.

Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

174

To his Sister, Pamela

SAUGHTON GRANGE,

CHESTER, September 25th, 1892.

DARLING PAMELA,—I must write you one line about Perfoo's riding. The day before yesterday he went out for the first time, boy-saddle on Cuckoo's old grey pony, led, of course, by a man on foot. He has a perfect seat, erect without any sign of constraint. He looked, in fact, like a good rider coming in from hunting quite at his ease.

I was really astonished to see his legs drop naturally into position, stirrup iron on the ball of his foot, reins held in left hand after once showing, and little crop neatly caught in the right. I walked alongside. He talked the whole time about foxes and coverts and the prospects of sport, and did not seem to be aware that he was high up from the ground, or that there was any occasion for nervousness. Even when the pony turned rather briskly to go home he did not tighten his hold on the reins or stop talking. All he said when we came in was 'I don't suppose many little boys ride such a big pony as that.' He is only to ride a very short time, 20 minutes, every day, so as not to tire his thighs. He at once took possession of all the saddlery in succession to Bendor. This is my saddle now, isn't it? all this harness is mine.' And to the groom 'where are the reins I had when I was a baby?' 'At home in the saddle-room.' 'What will they be for now? I suppose they'll do if another little boy comes!! Won't they? Won't they?' Repeated to the obvious embarrassment of his attendant.

When we came in we took a walk in the garden and noticed the chestnut leaves turning yellow. I said 'And in the winter they'll all be gone.' 'Yes,' said Perfoo 'and you don't see many lying on the ground. They go up somewhere. I don't know where, do you?' I think he was trying to fit the leaves into the scheme of metempsychosis with perpetual rebirth, which is at present the religion to which he adheres. The leaves, doubtless, go up somewhere and come down again to have another good time, just as the soul does in his opinion.

Love to all.—Your loving brother,

GEORGE.

175

To his Father

SANDBECK PARK,

ROTHERHAM, October 3rd, 1892.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Many thanks for your letter. I am glad you discovered some partridges on the estate,

at Derwent the grouse were very scarce. I shot on three days, shirking on Thursday as it was very cold and wet. We killed next to nothing, forty brace the best day. Otherwise, and even so, we enjoyed ourselves a good deal. The Alfred Lyttletons were there. She seems much softened by marriage though occasionally bursting out with a violent judgement on men or books. Alfred's a really splendid 'raconteur' telling good stories, and imitating Gladstone to the life.

We came on here for a quiet Sunday with Scarbrough. He is quite delightful as a host, and there is much to interest the man 'of a daughter of the house.' Absurd pictures, photos etc.

The gardens are very good and curiously enough pay their way, though he employs ten men in them. He tells me that the difficulty is to get recognized in the market as a *regular* provider, on whom they may count for a certain amount of produce every week.

In the afternoon we thoroughly overhauled the ruins of Roche Abbey, in a limestone valley just beyond the Park. The grounds are private and very beautiful. The ruins are wonderful, belonging to the transitional period which in many ways I admire most. The carving of the capitals might have been cut yesterday; there is not a rift in the walls and columns still standing in witness of the artistic perfection of architecture in the XIIIth century. As we came up to the ruin a pleasure party arrived, one remarked in a discordant voice, 'Ullo, there's a tree on the top' (a small ash) and so they passed on unregarding; leaving a curious feeling in the mind, that many things now standing as the monasteries stood in 1530, may fare as they did at the hands of Democracy. It is difficult to get at the truth of anything in history. But when I hear and read the kind of attacks made on aristocracies, churches, etc., I begin to think that Walter Map and the others who attacked the monasteries merely translated the envy of the envious into convenient platform charges. It is worth noting that the people rose three times to defend the monasteries; and immediately afterwards

when they had been well traduced, joined in their destruction. I fancy that this is the part generally played by the people, to follow the politicians of the day who succeed in rousing their passions and yet, when you see the delicate leaves in the carving of these capitals, the reed columns, the effigies and inscriptions on broken tombs, it seems a pity that the political force of the people cannot be directed by some more ingenious and less wasteful artifice. The loss of the artistic education in the Monastic buildings, and of the economical education in their traditional hospitality, was a big price for the desirable and necessary political end of freeing the Government from ecclesiastical control.

Last night I looked through a delightful old inventory of statues and pictures at Lumley, made out by 'John Lambton steward to your Lordship, etc., in 1590.' Among the pictures was one of 'Mr. Thomas Wyndham' drowned in returning from Guinea.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, October 6th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I send back Babington's letter, which deserves a place in the collection we over-hauled the other day. I hope dear old Guy will stop banging his head soon.

What melancholy autumn weather! Rain every day and dark skies. They put me in a torpid condition, so that I have no ideas, and can do nothing. I use these wretched days for paying bills; all they are fit for.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

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To his Sister, Pamela

BRIGHTON,
October 10th, 1892.

DARLING PAMELA,—I had a great burst of writing yesterday, finishing my Dedication of the Ronsard

translations, at a sitting, 4 till 8.30 in the evening. Whether from excitement or indigestion following on hunger and excess, (I think the former), I could not sleep, and lying awake this little song came into my head at about four o'clock this morning. Mamma may like it, as I borrow her name for Perfoo, and you, on account of your patriotic proclivities :—

1

Heart's Delight is five years old,
And rides an old white pony.
With the easy seat of a rider bold,
By grassy ways and stony,
In crimson cap and crimson gown
He rides his pony up and down.

2

Heart's Delight is five years old ;
His face is fresh and sunny,
His English hair just touched with gold
Amidst a browner honey,
And English eyes of deepest blue
Whose courage looks you through and through.

3

Heart's Delight believes the Sea
Was made for him to paddle ;
He also firmly holds that he
Was born into the saddle,
By right of Saxon blood and Norse
To kingdom of the Sea and Horse.

4

Of all the blessings given me
By Heaven, I prize rather
Above all other gifts, to be
A simple English father
Of one more little English lad
Alive to make his country glad.

This and the Ronsard were my Sunday debauch. On solemn weekdays I am wrestling with English prose and

being sadly worsted. I am trying to write an article for the 'National Observer,' to be called 'Whistling for the Wind,' in which I hope to portray Rosebery and Morley trimming to catch any breath of opinion to sail them out of their Irish and East African standstills.

I have got a tune in my head for 'Heart's Delight' which I shall now try to pick out on the piano.

Love to all.—Your loving brother, GEORGE.

P.S.—Somebody has truly said that no one can write Poetry after they are forty, nor Prose before it. Damn Prose.

P.S. 2.—Here is the music as well as I can write it. But the time always bothers me.

178

Extracts from letters to Mrs. Drew

October 1892.

Your suggestion of Ruskin¹ is most ingenious and attractive . . . But the precedent might prove embarrassing. It would largely obviate the necessity of appointing a man for his 'poetry' during the lifetime of other poets. Unfortunately Ruskin has recently published a Volume of weak and early verse. . . .

If only R. B. B. were alive to solve the question of the day! . . . I must say that in *my* judgment Swinburne's claims are immeasurably superior to those of any Englishman now living. Against it can be urged that in 'Poems and Ballads' first series, he published one or two poems open to censure on the ground of the subjects chosen, though above reproach in treatment and form. On the other hand, he has referred to these poems as sins of his youth, and has written many noble volumes since. Again it is said, truly but not widely, that years ago he drank. But again, on the other hand, he has for more than ten

¹ Refers to the question of the Poet Laureateship on the death of Lord Tennyson.

years lived the life of an Anchorite in a little Putney Villa. Such a complete recovery from what was with him a nervous disease, is remarkable if not unique, and speaks well for his will-power and self-control. Please read in the Volume I send, published two years ago, the 'Seamew,' the 'Jacobite's Exile,' the 'Threnody on Inchbold,' and 'The Commonweal,' his Jubilee Ode, and then consider whether any can touch him as a Poet. I believe that in the long run Public opinion will be more shocked by his neglect than by his recognition. . . .

I am very glad to know you like the little book . . . the outside falls short of my wishes and, indeed, of my directions . . . but the inside is all gold.

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To his Aunt, Mrs. Ellis

SAUGHTON,
November 7th, 1892.

DEAREST AUNT EMILY,—Many, many thanks for the old song. It is beautiful but hard to translate. Please thank Lucy also for the many gems she has copied out. At some time—there is, alas! no hurry—ask her to let me know the *number of feet* in the 'Breton' poems. A line or two copied from each would even help me more, as, without understanding the words, I could catch the lilt of their rhythm; or, at any rate, try to catch it: these things, slight in thought, depend on their sound for all the appeal they make to our hearts.

I have written only a few verses since I saw you, having been engaged in other things, a political article among the number in the 'National Observer,' Henley's paper, for October 22nd. This is the Autumn Sonnet as it now stands:

The windows are wide open to the peace
Of this pale morning's Autumn lethargy;
The spellbound shadows of the branches lie
Asleep beneath their sunlit silences.

Yet listen ! a light shiver in the trees ;
 A fleecy cloud's excursion through the sky ;
 A rook's contented caw, and quick the cry
 Of jackdaws multiplied in sharper keys.

Summer is dead. Dead, yet the world awakes
 To a new loveliness of field and wood
 Still beautiful though steeped in deeper rest.
 And we, Love, who have known the fever-aches
 Of Summer's passion, Spring's solicitude,
 We, too, shall call the birth of Autumn best.

I have also finished my dedication of Ronsard translations—too long to quote—and also this sonnet belonging to the 'Autumn' period of Spring's performance, when Youth may still gird ironically at the years that shall one day oppress it.

'SWEET SEVENTEEN'

One day you shall be beautiful, when pain
 Has taught your eyes' virginity to plead ;
 When Love has touched your lips and left the need
 Of pity round their petals, red in vain ;
 When you have felt the sunshine and the rain ;
 When you have heard of griefs and given heed ;
 When you have mourned for thought debased indeed,
 And wept for deeds that are not done again.
 That I might see you wake ! The masterpiece
 Of Love and Loveliness informed by sorrow,
 Whose artist hand shall give your soul release
 On some far-off and pitiful to-morrow ;
 Yet for your sake be still but Beauty's larve,
 A dashing marble fit for Time to carve.

With love to all.—Your loving nephew,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

180

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 December 12th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I have heard nothing from you or Papa for a long time. I sent him the Dover papers with

my speeches in them. And now to make you laugh, send proofs, especially the one marked X of portraits taken which show the result. 'Nothing more to say on any subject and I want to go to sleep.' Send them back with comments.

You will have heard of Panshanger from Pamela. The only blot on the visit was that I saw nothing of her. All the parties of the present day are over-womanned. It is a great artistic mistake in the interests both of dialogue and general conversation. Beautiful and clever ladies should never be mixed with men in a higher proportion than 3 to 7 : two men to each, and one over to promote circulation. In so far as dialogue is concerned no man can show due deference to eight or nine women in a week ; and as for general conversation ; if clever women take part in it three are enough since they are more impatient in talk than men so that six or seven of them discussing a subject are like a pack of hounds worrying a fox ; if on the other hand, they look on, and score the hits, a gallery of four or five is sufficient, for if larger the men split it in two, appealing only to those who agree with them. This was well understood in France 120 years ago. But here we base the construction of our parties on the beauty and wit of women. The first and only object is to get the eight or nine best of the moment under one roof. In many cases they are married to men who can only be considered as padding in any party. So that the system results in nine first-class women to five first-class and four second class men ; a vicious proportion for social purposes.

After Panshanger on Monday last we had a great birthday for Percy. The snow cut us off from communication even with Eaton, but we managed to amuse ourselves immensely. Darling Perfoo went about saying 'I am so happy, I shall never forget this birthday.' Nor does he forget last year's, for he reminded me of his wreath at Clouds and all your horses and the coach. We gave him a delightful dinner-set with which he has kept up a perpetual feast ever since, and a box of leaden ships representing

the Naval inspection before the German Emperor. He is now 'bien ferré' as they say in France on turrets, torpedoes, and all such destructive engines of war by sea.

I remember my fifth birthday quite distinctly—Papa's sprained knee from wrestling the night before, his volunteer képi, a set of skittles, mechanical drum, red coat and gun and sword, and the 35 perch we caught in Bassenthwaite Lake.

Since that (Monday, not my fifth birthday), I have been very busy writing an article for the 'Contemporary Review,' on the Bishop of Chester's Licensing Proposals. Perfoo said to S. S. 'We can't hardly see *Mr. Worky* Papa now, can we?' But I got it off on Saturday night and to-day we go to Wortley, for the Union of Conservative Associations at Sheffield with Arthur. Back on Wednesday and then I hope, a clear spell of hunting and enjoyment.

Tell Papa I am much impressed by the Agricultural Conference but not convinced that the protection of wheat is possible politically.

I must have a good week at Clouds before the House meets. Write me some news of Clouds soon.

With love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON,

CHESTER, *The morrow of Christmas*, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I must send you off a word of love for I am bubbling over with it. We are having a royal time here. All very well and very happy. I have not felt so well and so happy for a long time. Therefore I set it down and record it here—another trick turned and quitted in the rubber with envious Time. I can't say how dear Cuckoo and Lettice and Bendor are to me, and this is a source of unmixed joy. Perfoo, need I say, is delightful. Your farm was an immense success; and with a true knowledge of your son's folly you divined

rightly that I should be as pleased with the ploughs and carts and rakes as Percy himself.

He had a particular and concentrated Christmas for his own benefit. For in addition to the customary stocking, we put a little Christmas tree at the foot of his bed and woke him at half past seven to find it there in a blaze of light. He kept saying in a deep voice, like Ego's 'I am surprised.' 'I am surprised!' But your farm absorbed him above all else. He turned from it to nimbly open the many parcels, but after a word of passing praise, went back to his old love saying, 'What I really wanted was that big box.' Tell Pamela that 'Spot' [a fox terrier] also had a stocking prepared for him by Bendor, with an india-rubber mouse in it.

Yesterday afternoon in the exuberance of health and happiness I easily translated a sonnet of dear Ronsard, that had often attracted and as often baffled me before. It is most typical of his style. Full of ancient artifice. But as it happens I like ancient artifice. Give me a new moon, some roses and white lilies, seen in the soft light of ecstatic admiration, and I ask no more. At any rate I ask no more in those moods from which action and speculation are alike banished; when I see in the world neither a task to be accomplished, nor a problem to be solved, but simply a fair garden to be enjoyed.

LE PREMIER LIVRE DES AMOURS

I saw my love 'midst many a lovely maid,
As a new Moon the lesser stars among,
Who with her eyes, all stars outshining, flung
The beauty of the loveliest in the shade.

About her breasts the deathless Graces played,
With Wantonness and Cupids ever young,
There fluttering, like little birds who sung
Last year where boughs their newest green displayed.

The ravished sky, seeing how fair she was,
Rained rose and lily and garland on the grass
Circling the plot wherein she held her place.

Till in despite of Winter's frozen sighs,
By virtue of the Love-light in her eyes,
Spring came to birth, begotten by her face.

Roses and lilies, little birds and green branches, all in the light of Love's new moon. What more do you want? Sometimes, of course, we need songs of the waning Moon, the 'dying lady lean and pale.' But not always. Our modern Poets will always have it that the Moon is waning, over a garden rotting into Autumnal corruption. 'If you want pleasure and if you want sport,/Just take a trip to—' the garden of Pierre de Ronsard, Prince of Poets. You will find the garden old-fashioned, and the sport 'vieux jeu.' But the sport he sings *is* the oldest in the world, and the fashion of playing it the only one that has never changed. Let us therefore have it sung in a manner consecrated by ancient usage, with a proper accompaniment of roses and lilies, birds and green boughs. These are the things which first attracted the notice of man, when, ceasing to be a beast of prey, he had leisure to see and become a Poet. They caught his eye first because they were worthiest of his love, and replenished with delight. Let us therefore praise Pierre de Ronsard.

Thank dear Papa for his letter, and with all love to all at Clouds.

I am your happy and loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Sister, Madeline

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *The morrow of Christmas*, 1892.

MOST DARLING MANENAI,—I am overwhelmed by your beautiful gifts. They did, also, arrive on Christmas morning, and shall all hang in my tower room.

If only we could all be together! but even as it is I feel that Clouds, Babraham and Saughton are so many Leyden jars of electric love, with a strong current running round between them. It is so delicious to think that we are *all* talking nonsense to babies at the same time.

You will find my article rather dull and long in the '*Contemporary Review*' for January. I was asked to write it by the Editor, in place of the Bishop of Chester. It is written in the interest of Temperance Reform from a moderate standpoint. I believe in the scheme it puts forward, and that is always a consolation during a dark encounter with the English Language.

With love to Charlie and your babes.—Ever your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

183

To Charles T. Gatty

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, December 26th, 1892.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—How dare you give me such a beautiful present? I had read a review of the book and was thinking of bespeaking it. I like these old poets. If I am to have artifice, and I say no word against it, I prefer the ancient artifice of pleasure and knowledge to the modern artifice of ignorance and pain.

We are having a splendid time here. I have not felt so well and happy for many days. Nobody ill, nobody cross; in fact, I can hardly believe it's Christmas.—
 Yours ever,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, December 28th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—This is too terrible. I cannot bear to think of darling Mary's sorrow in the midst of my happiness here. I hate having written that letter to you. We only heard this morning that they were ill and did not even guess that you were anxious. The news made no impression on me, yet all the morning I had a horrible feeling of vague apprehension. The terrible news was read out off the telephone, which made it more hideous.

If you think it right I will come back to Clouds. I should like to get away from the merry-making here. But perhaps I ought not to. You can advise me.

Darling Mamma, hug Mary for me.—Ever most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 29th, 1892.

DARLING MAMMA,—I can't bear to think of it. Your account of the news coming to darling Mary wrings my heart; I hope from your telegram to-day that she is not more anxious about Ego and the others than the mere fact of their being ill must make her. Let me know often how she is, and how they go on, and kiss her from me. I had already thought that it was better, if anything is better in such a tragedy, for her to be with you all at dear Clouds. I am haunted by the image of Mary all day long and think of her from morning till night, with only a selfish shudder now and then over my own one solitary hope, also subject to such chances. It is awful to think that you woke as we did on Christmas morning with no hint of coming danger, and that all has been over for nearly two days.

Cuckoo is very dear about it and sorry. The others are still at the happy age which cannot understand sorrow and disbelieves in its existence.

Give darling Chang a great hug from me. I am keeping your letter, as I suppose it is not infected.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

186

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, New Year's Day, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—I have just written '1893' for the first time on a little line to darling Chang, and now write

it on one to you with profound hopes that 'it will better behave.'

Your letter this morning was a great joy to me. I like to realize it all, and do now.

I have been alone a good deal this last week. Darling S.S. of course, wanted to be with me and took a little walk on the black day¹ and dined another. But I would not let her keep away from Eaton altogether, where there were Christmas services in chapel and a family gathered together.

So I sat in my St. Gérome room and hurled myself upon old French translations. Some of the subjects were incongruous but the writing of verses,—the 'sad mechanic exercise'—is a wonderful companion.

One I did which I am almost sure you will like. Lucy Ellis first told me of it, but gave it me in what I knew must be an imperfect form. Since then I have often lost my temper, hunting through two volumes of Charles D'Orléans to find it. I told Sibell of this on Thursday, when she took up the book and it opened at the page! With this omen I set to work on the Ballade 'J'ay fait l'obsèque de ma Dame' and produced the following:—

I made my Lady's obsequies
 Within the minster of Desire;
 And for her soul sad diriges
 Were sung by Dule behind the choir;
 Her sanctuary was one fire
 With many cierges lit by Grief;
 And on her tomb in bold relief
 Were painted tears hemmed with a girth
 Of jewelled letters all around,
 That read:—Here lieth in the ground
 The treasure of all joys on Earth.

2

A slab of gold upon her lies,
 With sapphires set in golden wire;
 Gems that are Loyalty's devise,

¹ His sister's child, Colin Charteris, died of scarlet fever at Clouds on Dec. 27th, 1892.

And gold well-known for Joy's attire.
 Both were the servants of her hire ;
 For Joy and Loyalty were chief
 Among the virtues God was lief
 To show in fashioning her birth
 That to His praise it might redound,
 She being wonderfully found,
 The treasure of all joys on Earth.

3

Say no word more. In ecstasies
 My heart is raptured to expire,
 Hearing the noble histories
 Of deeds she did. Whom all aspire
 To set on high and ever higher
 Almighty God in my belief
 Drew her to Paradise, so if
 He might endow with rarer mirth
 His palace where the saints stand round.
 For joy there was in her, renowned
 The treasure of all joys on Earth.

ENVOI

Tears and laments are nothing worth ;
 All soon or late by Death are bound :
 And none for long hath kept and crowned,
 The treasure of all joys on Earth.

That is in what I call *your* style.

I am so sorry that Hugo has got it now. Give him my
 love, and hug Mary for me. Post going.—Ever most
 loving son,

GEORGE.

187

To his Mother

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, January 2nd, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—Your beautiful account of the white
 ceremony, led me to write these lines, which I call 'The
 Angel of Death.' I do not know what to think of them

so send them to you. Sometimes I feel that Art is out of place in dealing with real sorrow; and bad Art on such occasions is, of course, an outrage. If you think them worthy and fit give them to Mary. You will know whether they will pain her.

Supposing that you like them, you might carry out the design I have suggested for the Garden of Love.

Sibell likes the lines, but I cannot make up my own mind about them. With best love to darling Chang and all.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—You must not make yourself ill in labours of Love.

THE ANGEL OF DEATH

I

Within the garden of my Love
 Were flowers four;
 Lifting their little heads above
 The grassy floor.
 Lest thieves should find my treasures out,
 I walled my garden all about
 And shut the door.

II

And sweet it was to sit therein
 And watch them grow,
 Safe from the sacrilege of Sin,
 The stain of Woe:
 These should not come in any wise.
 Yet one there was whose soft disguise
 I did not know.

III

I could not know, because my heart
 Had never heard
 His name but with the anguished start
 Of some poor bird,
 Who cannot bear to face her fears,
 And flies from shelter when she hears
 The branches stirred.

IV

So it befell I did not guess
 My hidden foe.
 I wondered at his gentleness,
 And did not know.
 I shivered ; yet was glad to see
 My garden in the purity
 Of dazzling snow.

V

But when the South-Wind sent the rain
 That rendereth
 Lost flowers to the sun again ;
 I held my breath,
 And searched ;—yet only found, Alas !
 Three flowers growing in the grass.
 —And *this* was Death.

Jan. 1st, 1893.

188

To his Sister, Mary

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, Jan. 4th, 1893.

DARLING, DARLING MARY,—Your beautiful letter made my throat ache and my eyes blink, as they have ached and blinked for you more than once lately. I shall keep it with my most sacred treasures. You have been wonderfully brave and loving, and as Courage and Love are the two saviours of the World, they shall surely have their reward some day.

I shall always be sorry that I could not come to you and spend the days with you and dear Papa and Mamma.

Perfoo received the sad news without any surprise, saying quietly at once ‘I expect the Angels have taken little Colin.’ These little ones certainly do seem nearer the Kingdom of Heaven than we who have rooted our lives in the Earth. But they leave ‘the shades of the

prison-house ' still deeper when they take back their ' trailing clouds of glory ' to their home.

Get well and strong again soon, Darling Chang.—Ever
your devoted and loving brother, GEORGE.

189

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, January 14, 1893.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—It is sad to think of those dear little children crying. But for them it will soon be only a holy and mysterious memory without bitterness or regret. You must all keep up your spirits. ' If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind ? ' And there will be Spring again of joy and love for us all.

You must really not be uneasy about Guy. I received enclosed from Minnie apparently on last Sunday, and tried to send it off before. Will you send back the two marked for Sibell. Old Guy looks such a dear in them, and I am sure you will be glad to hear that marriage has led him to eat luncheon.

We, too, had our alarms and excursions last night. Perfoo became feverish in the evening, and complained of sore throat, a very restless night, with temperature at 102. Sibell and I were jumping up all the time. I don't think she slept at all, and I only did so in snatches, each one filled with a new and a more horrible nightmare.

At six o'clock we sent for the doctor who arrived at 8.30 and told us it was only an ordinary chill. Ooph !! Phew ! . . .

He has been going on well all day with lower temperature and good spirits.

This kind of thing is like sea-sickness. If only one could stop it for a short break of ease ! But, as I said before, we shall reach port soon and be all together ; perhaps at Easter.

I am so sorry for Papa, as this weather is quite dispiriting and liver-y enough without weakness. I am as

bilious as possible myself; and conceive the world for the moment as the bitter yolk of a gigantic egg; nauseating and yellow. Pah! I refuse any longer to look out of the window at the white sky and white ground with feeble untidy birds on it, like spiders on a ground-glass window.

I hope darling Chang will revive by degrees now that the cup has been drunk to the dregs. Give her a great hug from me, and take one yourself and pass it round.

I am very busy and feel very idle.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

190

To his Aunt, Mrs. Ellis

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, January 14th, 1893.

DEAREST AUNT EMILY,—Brizeux has arrived and I shall treasure him for his own and your sake. The tragedy at Clouds has saddened our New Year; I shall not be able to give the sigh of relief till they are all out of the wood. For darling Mamma and Mary are, I know, anxious and apprehensive, as those must be who have been through such terrible things. Little Perfoo gave us a shrewd turn last night, with high temperature and sore throat, but, thank God, it is only a chill.

I have been pegging away at my translations. Here is your little song. The short lines were hard to crack, but I have, I think, kept the faint note of sadness.

SPRING

Winter interréd lies,
Spring calls us back to her:
The glory of the skies
Shines newly everywhere.
How beautiful it is!
But you are lovelier.

The tyranny of years
 Shall pay you for your own.
 They change whatever cheers,
 And spare not any one.
 Beauty for all our tears
 Is like a rose, soon gone.

I hunted through weeks for Lucy's 'J'ay fait l'obsèque de ma Dame,' being confident from the form that she had happened on a portion of a 'ballade'; and unwilling to begin translating till I found the whole. I told Sibell this; she took up the book and opened it at the page! Poème de la prison, Ballade LXIX. Diriges=dirges. It is the word used in Morte D'Arthur.

BALLADE LXIX

I made my Lady's obsequies, etc. etc. (See letter No. 188.)

I hope you will like the 'obsequies.' I never expected to 'pull through' against 'the damnable iteration' of a ballade's rhymes. But thanks to having thoroughly soaked myself in Morte D'Arthur, it really does smell of a 14th century Cathedral.

Sibell sends her love and so do I to all at La Luquette.—
 Your very loving nephew, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

(Written on the other page of the same letter is this poem, a translation of one of Anthony Hamilton's.)

'Celle qu'adore mon cœur n'est ni brune ni blonde.'

ANTHONY HAMILTON.

She whom my fond heart adores is neither dark nor fair :
 To portray her in a trice,
 Be it said that she defies
 Compare.

Yet her sum of lovely things demands no toiling pen :
 Hundreds five that see the day,
 With the five she hides away,
 Make ten.

Both her wisdom and her wit bear heaven's hand imprest ;
 Charms a thousand have proclaimed
 That the very Graces framed
 The nest.

Where are colours to depict her dazzling countenance ?
 Flora should less radiant seem,
 And her bosom mocks the gleam
 Of swans.

Hers the waist and hers the arms that Venus had of yore ;
 Hebe's mouth and nose. So try
 By her eyes, to guess whom I
 Adore.

191

To his Father

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, January 27th, 1893.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I am afraid I cannot manage Mere. If I speak anywhere that week it must be at the bye-elections, as great pressure is being put upon me to do so. But I wish to avoid leaving London, if possible, until I have settled down into the new position of an independent member. I am anxious to get up a group of my friends in the House to work together below the gangway. Possibly, however, I may still sit behind Arthur as his formal private Secretary in the House. But on the whole I think it will be better whilst still working for him, and acting as his intermediary in the House, to sit elsewhere and keep a free-er hand. All this entails a great deal of colloquing with Arthur on the one hand, Harry Chaplin, Fisher and others who wish to push certain schemes to the front, and with whom I shall work ; Gorst and his group ; the Irish Unionist group, etc., etc., on the other. All this and the conquest of a recognised seat will entail constant attendance in the House and at the Carlton until I know where I am.

I have just come in from a capital day's sport, a hunting

run, six mile point on 'Daffodil,' and a brilliant twenty minutes on 'Chaff.' Both excelled themselves.

I am so glad that little Guy is better. Give darling Chang and all my best love.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Yesterday I jumped the Gowie on Anthony, only one other, I believe, cleared it; Trotter, Tomkinson and many more got in.

P.S. (2).—Have you got Milner's 'England in Egypt'? It is brilliantly written and of absorbing interest. Get 'Macmillan,' January number, for Rudyard Kipling's 'Elephant.'

192

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
March 5th, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—I have had a very busy and interesting week. So busy that I could not even answer your letter to Sibell. It is wonderful to think of you in that old room again. When I get out I shall expect to see you painting the sunrise and ask for the penny paid on being dressed by 7.30.

The Government are attempting to rush their Bill and ride rough-shod over all English protests and criticism. But they have gone too far, and at last our men have fairly got their backs up. We are fighting everything in the House and speaking all over the country. The battle is after all going to be worthy of the cause, and I am glad to have been born at such a time. There has been nothing like it since —32.

I wrote a short article for a Home Rule supplement of the 'National Observer,' spoke in the House Monday, for an hour and twenty minutes at Dover on Tuesday to a crowded and frantic audience. We have at last lashed our side into seeing that this is not an Irish but an English Bill, so that we may hope the Government will 'astonish themselves' as they persist in passing it against English

opinion by Irish, Welsh and Scotch votes. On Thursday I took part in the wild scene of disorder which signalized Mellor's first night in the chair. We are all in the highest spirits, Arthur is back again restored to health, and our men are ready to sit night and day, without holidays or respite, if need be for years. The Government are equally fierce, swear they will have Saturday sittings and not rise for Easter. A very pretty quarrel as it stands. Lord Salisbury is to speak at Belfast and Derry 'the maiden city.' Arthur in Dublin, and I hope Manchester. Churchill at Liverpool, and so on. I was very tired when I got here yesterday, but feel fresh and strong to-day and longing to be at them again. Both sides 'see red' and sooner or later you may expect a notable row.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

193

To his Mother

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, *March 26th, 1893.*

DARLING MAMMA,—Unless I write to contrary expect me at one o'clock on Thursday next. I have got rather a cold and cough and have made up my mind to start Wednesday, whatever, and take a week's rest with you at Hyères. How delightful it will be!

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

194

To his Mother

35, PARK LANE, W.,
Wednesday, March 29th, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—What a disappointment. I was so longing to set out to you. We still pretend I am going to start Saturday, but I have ceased to believe and doubt even if up to the journey whether it would be sensible for only five days with a rush back to speech on second reading. I thought I should just stay the course and get

out and be quite fresh again, instead of which, what must I do but go 'pop.' There is nothing the matter with me but this influenza which takes the form of a maddening nervous cough, day and night, not arising from lungs, but nerves about windpipe. I am quite sore inside, like a wound, with coughing and altogether tired out. Too lazy to read. I just lie here and wait till its over, but my spirit is with you all on the beach.

With best love to all.—Loving son,

GEORGE.

195

To his Mother

35, PARK LANE,

Good Friday, March 31st, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—Alas! Yes. I must give it up. Even before your wire arrived, I sent back this morning my third and last batch of sleeping-car tickets. 'Sad, sad, sad to heart' as Manenai wrote in her youthful but immortal work. The maddening part of it all is that there is no sufficient cause for my illness. Lungs as sound as a bell! But high temperature and ceaseless cough at night: cough not due to anything wrong but due to effect of Influenza on nerves. Comparable only to whooping cough. The microbes, I presume, begin to nibble the nerves of my windpipe and off I go in spasms of coughing that drench me with sweat, and tear my throat to ribbons and make my chest and stomach stiff with muscular pain. So it is every night. Last night till six o'clock in the morning when I sunk into deep sleep till ten o'clock.

The whole thing is so stupid for now in the day I revive, and the night fades away like a dream, and I long to go out in the sun. I have never had such a curious illness. You would be amused at the number of remedies, all useless! which we have tried. Inhaling opium inside; mustard and iodine outside; draughts, lozenges, cocaine syringes, poultices, lumps of ice, etc., etc., all futile. Bark! Bark! Bark! like a mad dog at the moon. Will write more to-morrow.—Loving son,

GEORGE.

196

*To his Sister, Madeline*35 PARK LANE,
April 1, 1893.

DARLING MANENAI,—I am sending you a little toy value 2s. 6d. ! for your hat as a birthday gift.

I like the flowers in the basket, and think the brooch will suit a big garden hat and doubtless excite the admiration of the Cambridge Undergrad.

I am up this afternoon and much better, but rather oppressed with irresolution at having to pick up the dropped threads of life. When we are well we forget what a continuous tissue our life is, the next stitches depending on the past pattern and all planned out beforehand. Suddenly we fall sick, go to bed for a week, and then when we get up have no pattern to work at ; no plan, nothing to *do*. Boo-hoo-hoo !

I want to be quite idle for a day or two, then gentle work and I *hope* the House again by Monday week.

As an idler I am completely spoilt. Directly I am out of bed I begin to fret at novels and grow restive even in the sunshine. But I intend, none the less, to forget the existence of Ireland till Thursday.

Love to Charlie.—Your loving brother, GEORGE.

197

*To his Mother*BABRAHAM,
CAMBRIDGE, April 3rd, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—We have arrived here all right and I am not very tired by the journey. It is delicious being with dear Manenai and I am sure the peace of her house will be better than even the sea, with the racket of an hotel. Thank Papa for his letter. I do take a good deal of care of myself but the last two months have been hard work for all. My fault is that I realize too vividly all that goes on around, so that listening to Debates tires

me more than others who are phlegmatically indifferent to the art, charm, argument and success of the men they hear speak. I mark, approve or resent not only every word of the speaker, but every change in the attitude of his audience; snorting inwardly with disgust when they do not see or applaud the best points. This is all unintentional on my part. I mean to be callous but get engrossed in the game.

The weather is more beautiful than the oldest can remember. Four weeks without rain!—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

198

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
April 24th, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—We arrived here Saturday; return to-morrow. There has never been such a Spring in the memory of the oldest inhabitants. The May was out on the night we arrived. The Lilacs are beyond words and beyond belief; every leaf hidden by the blossom. We have on one bank three several kinds, one 'lilac,' one a mysterious blue and one almost crimson, not to speak of the white. I sat all yesterday in the garden shut in by the yew hedge, with tulips and anemones and green grass and all the birds singing. If only I could paint! As I can't, I tried an 'Impressionist' sketch in words. Tell me if you like it and ask Pamela.

APRIL

April the flower and not the fruit of joy.
Her sky one blue, her earth one green, two planes
Reflecting all the sunlight of the world.
Her orchard-trees, not laden with their bloom,
Rather as if for lightness they would soar,
Floating on snowy petals to the sky
And be white clouds where not a cloud is seen;
Yet tethered to the fields by single stems
Each with its little shadow on the grass.

The shining grass, starred everywhere with gold
 And tiptoe daisies straining to the sun . . .
 The sanguine tulip's sharp vermilion . . .
 The velvet crimson of anemones . . .
 The wonder in the newness of the leaves . . .
~~—Only the Ash refrains herself from joy~~
~~With half-fledged boughs still traced against the blue—~~
 In every bush a fluttering of wings
 Where little birds are fluting, . . . not of love,
 Not of Content, for that recalls Desire,
 But just of joy. And Lilacs everywhere :—
 Lilacs protesting trees shall not be green
 With million-clustered quatrefoils that hold
 All mingled mysteries of pink and blue,
 —The unread riddle of the Amethyst. . .

April the flower and not the fruit of joy :
 For all her beauty means not anything ;—
 The secret of her joy, that she has *none*,
 Nothing to hide or tell to any heart,
 Nothing of Passion, nothing of Regret,
 And for her culminating crown of praise,
 Nothing of Resignation. God be thanked !
 April is merely beautiful and glad.

On second thoughts I think the Ash must come out.

199

To his Mother

August 28, 1893.

DARLING MAMMA,—Yes. I am here at Saughton and am going to spend half my birthday before returning to London. So I shall pick up your second blessing to-morrow eve, before my birthday is over.

I do so wish I could be with you. I hate thinking of *you* laid up. It seems such a contradiction to the laws of Nature.

I am coming, as you know, to Clouds next Sunday, and will wheel you about in the chair. I am an adept at chairs,

having wheeled Sibell all through —89, and been wheeled when I speared my foot.

I am busy to-day as I wish to work up a speech for the 3rd reading, so as to play about in the garden all to-morrow morning. I worked at it yesterday. It is a case of 'Once more into the breach, Dear Friends, once more.' But what a puff of relief, to think that it is really the last time!

I rode early this morn with Lettice over the dew; and now, listening to the mowing-machine on the lawn and watching the shadows on the grass, I feel most idle and disinclined to tackle the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland. How tired I am of the names of those two islands. 'Great Britain and Ireland' Phew! . . . And on a day like this!

You will be glad to know that I saw Anderson on Friday, and that I am very much better of my only ailment, gouty acidity. Much better than at the beginning of the session. This speaks volumes for the constitution you gave me thirty years ago.

I nearly weep when I think to-day, for the last day, on 'That too froward Twenty—that heads the sum of my offending years.' I don't want to be thirty a bit. Feel so young. Not a year older in my tastes than ten years ago. I like sailing boats on ponds and riding about with my hat off, better than anything else. What have I done to deserve this?

And now, *reluctantly*, to work. With all love to you, Darling Mamma, and commands that you get well soon.
—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

Ætat 29 Ann.

364 Dies.

200

To his Mother

SAIGHTON,

December 2nd, 1893.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—At last I have a moment in which to write. The news of your welcome back to dear

Clouds and of your getting stronger and stronger has made me quite happy during dull days of duty at Dover. Speeches, concerts, dinners and countless interviews. I got away from them all on Thursday, paired for ten days and ran down here to hunt. Had a capital day yesterday, a good run on 'Chaff' about four miles straight and fast to the river Dee which the fox swam but kindly swam back about a mile and half further on and so allowed us to hunt him slowly to within a mile of the covert in which we had found him. We found another in the same spinney and had a fast gallop. I rode 'Anthony' in the second run.

In my absence Percy has become a poet. He was sleeping with Sibell but was awake part of the night and kept asking her to get up and write down the poetry he was making. But she was too sleepy and told him to wait till the morning. The very first thing he woke her with paper and pencil and proceeded to dictate his first poem, about her rose-room in which they had slept. Later on in the morning he composed a second piece dealing with Saighton generally. He was much excited over his verses and made Sibell read them over and over again to him, delighting in the sound of his words. But his chief excitement was the thought of showing them to me on my return. Once he said, 'I feel a little shy about my Poetry, but still it is only my own little words and I hope Black-Fox will like it.'

Here is the first.

Mama's rosy room
With bookstands all around
The sunset brings its colour.
The birds who chirp in the dawn
And fly with their little wings.
Jesus' silver altar;
His presence standing by.
Sibell the great Angel
Looking over me,
Her little child named Percy,
Who clings to his mother's knee.

Every word of that was absolutely his own and it was dictated without any suggestion from anyone.

Here is the second.

Two Angels over Mother,
One Angel over me.
Saughton Tower is on a hill ;
All around are glossy fields.
The crows fly by the hedge-rows
When the round sun goes to bed.
The trees stand up so high
Where they make their happy nests.
Percy's flowers grow
Within his white garden-gate :
' *Love-in-a-mist* ' and ' *pansies* '
And *sweetest* ' *mignonette* .'

Every word of this was also his own except ' *Love-in-a-mist* ' and ' *sweetest* ' which were suggested in answer to his request for the name of another of his flowers and for something to put before ' *mignonette* .'

I think them very remarkable. They are like primitive Poetry which just catches at lovely things and strings them together in a barbaric necklace of uncut stones. And yet they are, in some ways, higher than the verses of rude and primitive nations for they exhibit real observation ; a distinct choice of epithet ; and a good rythm in three beats sustained without any harsh lapse throughout. The keen imaginative delight in lovely things which you inherited from your mother is handed down to the third and fourth generation ; curiously coloured in each by the affluent rill of another race. Here are verses written at the age of five—nearly six—before a single book has been read ; and in them we find your imaginative love of Nature just tinged with Sibell's imaginative love of Religion. If you are writing to Mr. Burne-Jones I should like you to send him a copy of Percy's earliest poems for he has always been fond of Percy.

As you asked for it I add a copy of my ' *October* , ' a very second-rate affair after the other.

OCTOBER

I

The summer hours of heavy and hushed desire
Have passed away.
Those suns are set that Passion lit with fire.
Low clouds are grey :
For the sky, no more earth's ardent lover,
Broods as a silvery dove above her,
With some soft, few,
Long plumes of blue
The grey ones almost cover.

II

You may see again the gleaming layers of the sky
Between the boughs,
Whose summer-woof once shut from every eye
Love's darkened house ;
You may see again the ivy clamber
Along the rods of each ruined chamber,
Where last night's wind
Has closelier thinned
The fluttering leaves of amber.

III

The woods are cavernous as once in Spring,
When leaves were small :
Now they are few. And yet, remembering
Her first sweet call,
There is an echo of the wonder
Our aching hearts had when they found her
A little pale
Of face and frail
As the boughs she was walking under.

IV

For Spring was joy. Autumn is called Regret ;
Yet loved for this,
That she, too, walks the glades where Spring was met
Ere Summer's Kiss

Of blinding Passion in hidden valleys
 Made us forget the wind-swept alleys
 And sun-lit swards,
 Where life's rewards
 Were Joy and her maiden sallies.

v

Yet since it is not given to linger long
 In ways once sweet :
 Let us within, to hear the Autumn song
 Of the window-seat :
 Let us watch from the window the yellowing ashes,
 With eyes just dimmed by tearful lashes,
 For summer is fled
 And passion dead
 In the song of the window-sashes.

I also enclose a letter from Henley about 'October.'

I think I have nearly finished my 'French Poets.' It remains to write a preface to please myself and not the Public. In which I shall say I like Poetry about pretty things, in amusing metres, with lots of rhymes. I have found an early ode of dear Pierre de Ronsard, gentilhomme, Vendomor's Prince des Poètes François, which he withdrew from his published works. But just consider the title ! 'Des Roses plantées prez un Blé' (1550) 'Of Roses planted by a Corn-plot.' Is not that full of delight. Really there was no need to write the song. But he did write it of the roses to one Rose. And here is my version:—

DES ROSES PLANTÉES PREZ UN BLÉ

God save you Splendour of the Spring,
 Blazoning
 The jewels strung upon your spray
 Unveiling your vermilion
 To the sun
 In its virginal array.

You see your face's cinnabar
From afar
Multiplied amidst the wheat ;
Amidst the wheat whose vivid green
Shines more sheen
Beside your fellows set in it.

So by you, where your sweets suspire ;
Filled with fire,
Despite the triple Sisters sad,
I do design to make my song
Match the long
Sweep of the wings that Horace had.

Let others sing the Pink's soft hues
If they choose
Or of the Lily's silvery flower,
Or of the golden Fleur-de-lys
She that is
Emblem of our Prince's power.

But I, while voice is mine to sing,
Still will fling
All my praise before the Rose,
The more so since she bears the name
Giv'n by Fame
To her who all my worship owes.

And here to wind up is a sonnet from the *Le Premier
Livre des Amours*.

CLIX

Here is the wood my Angel-sweet cajoled
To life again in April with her song ;
Here are the flowers she used to walk among
Lost in the holy dreams she never told :

Here is the field whose tender green and gold,
Touched by her hand, sprang fresher for the wrong
She wrought in pillage of the million-throng
Enamelling the meadow's emerald.

Here did she sing ; yonder I saw her cry ;
And here she smiled ; there, was I ravished by
Those eyes that light my darkness at their rays :

Even here she sate ; and there I saw her dance :—
 Love on the loom of such a vague romance
 Stretches the shadowy fabric of my days.

Darling, I am coming to see you soon. Directly if it freezes. But soon, anyhow.—Your most loving son,
 GEORGE.

201

To his Sister, Madeline

SAUGHTON,
 8.2.94.

DARLING MANENAI,—I do not know whether I shall catch mail or not. Hope so as have been very naughty about writing to you.

Darling Perfoo has been frightening me with influenza and great weakness, but he is now getting well and worth a King's ransom. His wild joy in the return of health and life and Spring beat cock-fighting. Yesterday Charlotte, Sibell's maid, who loves, but nags at, him in a prim manner and aggravating voice, said, 'Dear, you ought not to go out in those shoes in Winter.' Perfoo: 'My DEAR, (with prolonged emphasis) Winter! The birds are singing!' The contrast of voices and of thought-categories is sufficing.

To-day he walked to see a lady he loves called Moor Molly, weighing 14 stone, but whom he calls 'Midge.' He went with 'Holly,' the primeval maid of Cuckoo and Lettice, if possible more dry, more dull, more 'guindée' than Charlotte. But fired with young love and the scent of Spring afar off, he returned with flushed cheeks and a jubilant heart, saying, from the fulness of it, to Sibell, 'Oh, we have had such a lovely walk, and we have been talking all the time.' 'What did you talk about?' 'Oh, it was so lovely! We talked about the trees, and the flowers, and the clouds.' Sibell (surprised at this new conception of Holly's character, and knowing well her limitations) with real curiosity, 'What did "Holly" say about the flowers and trees?' Perfoo, after a moment's

thought, 'Holly didn't talk about them, I talked about them and Holly always said "O."'

A number of people called in the afternoon. When the 3rd carriage drove up Perf, at the window, 'Mamma, this is *overwhelming*,' in the old traditionary attitude of the Wyndhams towards their country neighbours.

I saw your darlings twice at Clouds and I am proud to say that Poussin i. still reveres her uncle as a Yorick of 'infinite jest'; sits on his knee and leads him about by the fore-finger. She has a deliciously hereditary manner also: deprecating with all Charlie's and Lady Libbet's common-sense my erratic behaviour. My first visit was but of 2 days, and Pamela having done me the honour of asking how long I should stay, met my reply with the infinite contempt of 'Well, you are in a hurry to get away!'

I have had a gorgeous holiday of four weeks' undiluted poetry and hunting, living in the rhythm of verse and gallop, and more than ever convinced that a bold fencer and the English language are the two vehicles of Paradisal progression.

Love to Charlie.—Ever your loving brother,

GEORGE.

202

To his Mother

SAIGHTON,

February 28th, 1894.

DARLING MAMMA,—Just a word of love, to say how delighted I am to think of you 'gadding about' again!

I am afraid I shall not be in London Monday but I am going to Stanway on the 9th or 16th probably the latter. If so would travel back with you, supposing you go via London.

We are all well here and I have never been happier than during the last three months. Really I have not since I began life, or at any rate since my long leave in 1883 when I hunted regularly at Wilbury, had such a stretch of Home

life, without over-work and over excitement. I feel five years younger than I did this time last year.

It will be delicious to meet you at Stanway.

Ever *most* loving, *proud* and *grateful* son, GEORGE.

203

To his Father

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, April 8th, 1894.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We are dying for news of the Indians.¹ If they have arrived give them our fondest love.

We had high jinks here yesterday. I only got down the night before and found Percy wild with excitement over the Point-to-Point. He knew all about the finish, and the flags and the rules of the game, and was convinced that the Yeomanry would win. We rode eight a side; for the Yeomanry, Harrington, Tomkinson, Court, Frewen (Adj.) Leigh, Phillips, Jones and self. For the 14th Hussars, Gough, Murray, Stacey and Tottenham were those we dreaded. There were no conditions, except catch weights over 12.7 as the 14th refused to ride unless they were allowed to run winners of races, and any horse belonging to the regiment. Gough rode 'Hard Times' who has won I should think a dozen races or a score, and mounted at least three of the others, notably Murray their best jockey on a very good race-horse. The course was nearly four miles, about three quite straight to a flag on a poplar in the Eaton Drive, then a turn to the right and another mile to the high ground of Saighton before the Elm Avenue opposite the Conservatory, all grass with nineteen fences, two of them wide brooks.

I hesitated long between my new horse who is very fast, and Novelty. I might have won on the new horse, but was not sure of his fitness and accomplishments. On Novelty I knew I could not win against the racers, but felt

¹ His sisters, Madeline and Pamela, and Charlie Adeane had been travelling in India during the winter.

pretty sure of running well and getting good marks. So I decided on riding Novelty and making the pace as hot as I could in the hope of flurrying the racers. I had a delightful ride, first over the first fence and made the running for nearly three miles, Murray came alongside a field before the Drive, and then Frewen on his grey who also has won a good many races and Gough on 'Hard Times'; they passed me over the Drive and in that order we jumped the brook and all the remaining fences. I thought I kept this fourth place to the end but the judges decided that a Hussar who came with a rush beat me by a head for 4th place. After me a batch of our men in red came in. But beyond the 8th place the judges muddled their count and could not decide whether we had won by 68 points to 66, or whether they had won by 69 points to 65. The Judges gave us the race first but allowed themselves to be argued into doubt, and finally pronounced it a tie. I have no doubt that we won; and had not Harrington like a good Christian but very bad jockey waited to pick up one of their men who was hurt, he would have saved his time, which as it was he only just missed, and we should have won easily; indeed, if he had cantered on he would have been not only within the time, (five minutes after the winner) but before their last man who fell at the last fence, had his horse caught and brought back to him and so, only just got in within the limit.

Their man who was hurt is laid up here with concussion and a broken collar-bone to the delight of all the servants. He is going on very well.

Best love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

204

To his Mother

July 28th, 1894.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—This is *too* disappointing, all the more as I had starved myself of seeing you, Chang,

Pamela and Manenai under the belief that I could take it out at Clouds.

I have struggled hard to keep Sibell quiet all the summer but what with one thing and another, relaxed my vigilance the last week, because it was the last week, I thought we were out of the wood, and halloa-ed to the extent of dancing myself with Sibell on Thursday. She enjoyed the dance at Willis' immensely and came home quite well; but yesterday, Friday, morn complained of great fatigue and *pressure*, so filled with foreboding I went off with Percy to the 'Chutes' to find the old business on return at four o'clock; mysterious servants, asking me to go up to her room and all the rest of it. She had collapsed with pain and faintness about 3 o'clock. Nothing like the last time, but still, not sufficiently different to make me feel quite happy.

So that settles our plans for some time. I expect she will be in bed at least a fortnight. There is no more to say.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—I enclose my last long speech.

205

To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
August 31st, 1894.

DARLING MAMMA,—Alas! I am afraid I cannot manage Clouds this Sunday. I am so sorry to miss Mr. and Mrs. Kipling, and so sorry not to be with you again. But I will come back in September for a week when I have made some real way with the book.

I cannot come as we start at 12 o'clock on Monday and I have to pack my books.

Best love to you darling Mamma and to all at Clouds.

I feel very old, 31! Tell Pamela that on Wednesday morn I found 'I had aged terribly in the night.'

I went to the 'Chutes' with Lettice, Guy and Minnie for my birthday and was given 'The Gem' by Sibell.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

206

To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
September 1st, 1894.

DARLING MAMMA,—I loved getting your beloved letter and Darling Pamela's too. They came more fortunately than on my birthday for I had a tiresome turn of neuralgia yesterday and could not work and felt useless and stupid this morning. But your letters made me think that perhaps I was of some use to somebody so I cheered up.

I think I shall go to Derwent Monday for three days on the moor whilst they are unpacking at Saughton.

With best love to darling Pamela and Papa and all.—
Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

207

To Charles T. Gatty

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, 25.9.94.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I count the days till 'Shakespeare' and your visit. We get here the 8th October from Temple-Newsome, and that evening is the historic 'Conversazione' you might join in as in '89.

Let us have a lecture on 'William' in the school, shall we? I am committing his sonnets to memory ready for your discourse, one each day as I shave in the morning.

Otherwise I am agonizing over my essay on the French Poets all the morn, and talking nonsense to the children the rest of the day.

Perf is prodigious. I walked him to the river and rowed him up to tea at Alford yesterday. To wile away the 'weary'—not that it was so, one minute of it—I embarked on the siege of Troy. When I wound up 'And so Troy was taken and burnt,' Perf: 'What a pity, after taking all that time to get it!' I explained, rather knocked out, 'Ah yes, but they wanted Helen.' 'Yes,' said Perf, 'but they might have burnt her by mistake.' When I

got to Circe and said 'She was an enchantress and turned all his companions into pigs,'—Perf: 'Why? Why? I suppose she wanted some bacon.' This not as a joke, but prosaic solution of her eccentric conduct. He thought Priam and Hecuba very funny names.—Yours affectionately,
 GEORGE.

208

To Charles Whibley

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
 CHESTER, October 1st, 1894.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I was on the point of writing you a letter to be forwarded from 9 The Terrace, but now, knowing your address, I do congratulate you from my heart on taking so wise a step. I wish you joy with confidence and authority, as one who knows. There is nothing like the companionship of marriage for all who work, and above all for those who work with their heads. In the moments of unable despair it is so good not to be alone.

I wish I could have achieved your gamut, and wish I could see you before you leave. But am rooted here, so unless you will run down for a day or so next week, which we should both appreciate, I do not know that this thing can be. Come if you can and have one good talk. I have a speech on Monday but after that am free. I shall be in London on the night of 16th and if you are still about, wish you would dine with me. Perhaps Henley would come too.

I hope you do not mean to desert London altogether.—
 Yours always, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

209

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
 October 27th, 1894.

DARLING, DARLING MAMMA,¹—I have been talking to you in the spirit a great deal these days; for the spirit-

¹ On the death of his cousin, Lord Drumlanrig.

world has been one agony and halloo of 'Mother and Son' at all hours; drowning the sounds of earth with wailing and transfusing it with light. . . .

He has out-soared the shadow of our night,
 Envy and Calumny and Hate and Pain
 And that unrest which men miscall Delight,
 Can touch him not and torture not again.
 From the Contagion of the World's slow stain
 He is secure. And now need never mourn
 A heart grown cold a head grown grey in vain . . .

He *must* feel this explosion of love and recognition from all, and at last, in spite of his wonderful humbleness and simplicity, guess how much a better man he was than his fellows. If you can tell his mother that I knew him for what he was, all along, tell her so and that I think of her all day.

I wonder if she has his Coldstream Bear-skin which used to be mine. If he passed it on when he left, I will try to get it again and give it her.

I did not know till to-day—from Minnie—where you were, but I guessed, knew, indeed, well enough that you were in your *own* place, in the thick of the arrows, beside the wounded.

I have a selfish longing to be hugged by you. . . .

Except the four days at Temple-Newsam we have been here two months in peace; reading and writing and superintending Percy's education.

Give my heart-felt love to Sibyl and little Wommy,¹ and to Pamela; and all love to your own self.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

210

To his Mother

SAIGHTON,
 CHESTER, October 29th, 1894.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—If proof were needed that our minds communicate without speech or writing, is it not strange that you *made* me write almost in your words of

¹ Lady Queensberry and Lady Edith Douglas.

the 'spirit-world,' long before I got your letter. As I wrote I felt your influence and wondered if you were writing to me. I cannot help believing that all who have felt very deeply, have felt the influence of the living at a distance and of the dead. When we face danger, all the Norsemen sit up in their mounds; when we love, all the 'ladies dead and lovely knights' wish us to be true and gentle. How much more closely must those we have known and loved in life, attend our steps.

'When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair
And love and life contend in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom. *The Dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.'*

It is wonderful that Shelley wrote that. Of comfort to know that the lines are from a man without a taint of superstition, or weak spot of fear in his soul. He wrote so because at the time he actually was telling dead Keats the things you cannot say to a man while he is alive.

We go to Wynyard to-day so for a little while my 'true life' is broken. However at Wynyard or elsewhere I hope to be myself. Ruskin with some admixture of folly has got nearer the heart of truth than anyone. The 'False Life' is the Enemy:—of truth, beauty, goodness, everything, 'the life of *custom and accident,—in which we do what we have not purposed; say what we do not mean; and assent to what we do not understand.*' That is the Enemy: not Satan nor another.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

211

To his Father

12 MARINE PARADE,
DOVER, November 15th, 1894.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I sent £10 to Waugh in memory of dear Drummy,¹ the other day; if you start a fund I shall ask him to transfer it.

¹ Lord Drumlanrig, his cousin.

On Tuesday we had Lord Roberts at the Mayor's Banquet here. Yesterday I went up in the morning to a Board Meeting and back in the afternoon. Sunday I mean to spend with Guy and Minnie. The book will certainly not be out till next summer. But before February I have promised to write an introduction to North's Plutarch. The art of writing has to be learnt, like everything else, by practice.—Your ever loving son,
 GEORGE.

212

To his Mother

12 MARINE PARADE,
 DOVER, November 15th, 1894.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am very busy, but must find time to send you some of Percy's 'poetry' as he asked me to do so and will, doubtless, expect a word of praise from his Gan-gan. They were all done one morning—last Monday, 12th November 1894. The first dictated to Sibell is his account of a beautiful dawn he watched a few days before.

I

I saw the sun rise near and wide.
 The pond looked like a star on earth.
 The breeze was soft and gentle
 Upon that morning fair,
 It seemed like Paradise!
 The great big birds went flying by,
 And all the sky was crimson red,
 The little birds were twittering in the trees
 The hills that morning were *bright dark blue*¹
 It was just like summer,
 And yet it was nearing Winter
 The horses were in the field eating quietly by,
 I saw them with my own bright eye.

¹ *Editor's Note.*—'Bright dark-blue.' Our author here refers to the apparent lustre of the hills, burning blue.

II

THE DRAWING-ROOM, A FRAGMENT¹

The drawing-room is bright and lovely
 Mother is bright and fair . . .
 The golden-ceiling and the lattice windows . . .

III

THE REGATTA, A FRAGMENT

The Ormonde and the Bendor
 Went shining down the Dee
 Every house was lit with lamps
 And every rail you see.
 The rockets shot up and down
 In showers of gold.
 The lanterns hung in rows and rows on
 The lines of the little sailing boats . . .

IV

SAIGHTON BY MOONLIGHT. FRAGMENT

The stars and the moon at Saighton Tower
 The lamps all over the House
 The fire shining bright . . .

Here follows a master-piece which is also a mystery.

V

SUMMER AT SAIGHTON

The woods and fields round Saighton Tower;
 The birds chirping in the trees;
 The Summer hay-carts going to the hay-fields;
 The doves flying round Saighton all the Summer:—
 They perch on the Tower and on the window-sills.
 The great noise from the Hills, like a horn;

¹ *Editor's Note.*—This and the succeeding pieces were dictated to me in about a quarter of an hour. The poet, it will be seen, flitted from one subject to another, remarking at the end of each rather short lyrical burst, 'I think that's all I need say about the Drawing-room' or 'the Regatta,' or 'Saighton by Moonlight,' as the case might be.

'The Regatta' is descriptive of the illumination of the Dee in 1893, on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' visit to the Royal. The 'Ormonde' and 'The Bendor' are the steamers on which the Prince and the Corporation passed down the river.

I have often asked people what it is,
 And they say, 'It is the Horn of Distress.'¹
 And so, always, when I hear that noise,
 I say, 'It is the Horn of Distress.'

I think the last very wonderful, all the more so as being quite unconscious. It makes me shiver, this threatening sound of sorrow vibrating through the peace of a child's summer. I wonder what it was. Train or threshing-machine, or, as I believe, sheer imagination. I never say 'what nonsense' to him as I am confident he mixes up his day-dreams with what really happens; coming out with tremendous reminiscences of things that have never been.

Darling, give my best love to dearest Sibyl, and to Pamela.—Ever most loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—Just let Percy know you have read his poem, and don't ask him about the horn.

213

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
 December 2nd, 1894.

DARLING,—I have just read the book of 'Thel.' It is very wonderful and beautiful. 'I ponder and I cannot ponder, and yet I live and love.' That seems to be all we can any of us say: only some say it in many words and some in few.

I have a speech to-morrow, after that I hope to settle down again to reading and writing. Darling Chang came here Friday. It was too good of her making the effort to come when she has so much to do. And I do not think it has tired her. I mounted her on Anthony yesterday and piloted her in two little gallops. I think she enjoyed

¹ *Editor's Note.*—I questioned the poet discreetly, so as not to show surprise, on 'the Horn of Distress.' He only answered 'Oh I often hear it, in summer and winter. I heard it often last summer. I asked everybody, men, women, and children. They all said, "It is the Horn of Distress."' "

it very much. She was not tired as we left the hounds at one o'clock. But to-day she is stiff.

Perfoo is dying to go to Egypt with her. I hear the little rascal has calmly asked you for a tricycle. *Of course* you must not think of giving him such an expensive present. Did you like his poetry?

He would like a letter on the right day, December 5th, Wednesday, from you, and from Papa if he has time to write, and from Pamela. That is what really pleases him. He tells me that he will be busy answering his birthday letters up till Christmas. So I hope he will get some.

Love to Papa and Pamela and Dorothy.—Ever most loving son,
GEORGE.

214

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, December 5th, 1894.

DARLING,—I answer your letter at once, although I cannot quite promise to come to Clouds. I am so bested in the battle, by work to be got through. And *I* never can work as Arthur does away from my own room.

I have done Dover for the present; spoke Monday for Bobby Ward at Nantwich; and took the Chair last night at our Parish meeting to elect our Council, a very intricate and difficult task. However, all went off well, and at about 8.30 I announced the seven councillors duly elected, to wit—the parson, a small architect, a big farmer, a small farmer, our gardener, and two masons.

Now I must work every day at my introduction to Plutarch. It entails reading all the lives in old English and old French, and tracing Shakespeare's debt in Coriolanus, Julius Cæsar and Anthony.

Not to speak of my own book which has again gone into the background.

So that Clouds after Christmas means giving up almost the last chance of doing anything this year. If I have luck and improve my pace I will come.

Meanwhile I have a most wonderful specimen of humanity in the house, painting Sibell. The absolute hero of a novel. Prince Troubetskoy by name; six foot in his socks, and quite charming; so simple and boyish. His father a Russian, long dead, mother American; himself a native of Italy; living in England. He has just painted Lady Eden. I do wish Pamela could drop down here from the sky and spend a week with us. I write in my own room and they paint in the Conservatory all the morning. The house keeps pretty full, too, of other people. Wedding guests next week, and Bosie¹ on the 15th. Edward Clifford coming, and apparently many more.

Do you know Alfred Milner? I want Pamela to meet him, but I do not know him well enough to get him here. I have met him and liked him and I suppose he will some-day be Chancellor of the Exchequer!

I mean to bring my Russian to Clouds some day; he is like a great Newfoundland dog. Keen in a nice bright way on philosophy and the bettering of the world. One of his brothers is a sculptor, and another a musician and naval architect. He came to London to make his way three years ago and for seven months paid for his dinner by selling pictures for 10/- apiece to a little man near the British Museum. He has now painted Lady Eden and Lord Battersea and will succeed.

His price is from £50 to £70. Age 30 years.

Darling I will think over Clouds. Give my best love to Pamela, and wish me luck with my 'Plutarch.'—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

215

To his Sister, Madeline

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
5.2.95.

DARLING MANENAI,—I have never thanked you for your delightful letter. All that you said of 'Phyllis' pleased me immensely, for the whole business is to give pleasure to the ear.

¹ Lord Alfred Douglas.

In the March number of the 'New Review' I shall have an article called 'The Poetry of the Prison'; meanwhile I am pegging away at 'Plutarch.' Although I shall make a hash of it, I am most grateful for having been *made* to read him through word for word. It is, after the Bible, Shakespeare and Morte D'Arthur, the *biggest* book in English prose, full of wonderful things; most beautiful, and strong and amusing, turn by turn.

I should like to see you off before your journey.

Love to Charlie.—Your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

216

To his Sister, Madeline

35 PARK LANE, W.,
7.3.95.

MY DARLING MANENAI,¹—Your letter reached me just before I was laid low—for the fourth time—by the pest. I enjoyed it very much, and another, too, which Papa showed me. You really do tell all the amusing little things one expects to know.

I have been going through my well-known performance, and have now reached the abject fifth act of convalescence. It reminds me so of two years ago and my delightful visit to Babraham—Julia Peel and the hawthorne brakes—the Poussins and little ducks—Charley's champagne and my slumbers out of doors. I am getting on much faster this time.

I am glad that the Sistine Madonna is as you say. Nothing is a greater relief than to find that the great originals, when seen, triumph even over all their own reproductions. One cannot help dreading that the photographs and prints of the Sistine may have made it impossible to see it as it is. But I take your evidence that she romps in 'quand même.'

Give my love to Charlie, and take mountains of it for yourself. How I should like to see you attacking the 'edge'!—Your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

¹ His sister was spending some weeks at Dresden.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
March 10th, 1895.

DARLING MAMMA,—I have just been out for my first walk since Wednesday week—a wonderful March morning with the earth's spring-cleaning in full swing; and the wind pushing about the furniture of Heaven and sweeping large blue-spaces before him. I have got off much more lightly this time, and with estimates only in the House, shall be able to coddle a week longer. Meanwhile I peg steadily at 'Plutarch' in growing terror at his increasing size. I have compounded for sixty pages; but how to squeeze him in? The only way is, I think, to write all, and then keep nothing but the cream. He is a very jolly fellow to live with and I shall be sorry to say 'Good-bye.'

If only I had the Arabian carpet, wouldn't I fly out of the window, over the roofs and hop-poles and flint churches; the waves and sand-hills; the poplars and mulberries, olives and vines; over all the little white houses with red roofs; and then with a lift into the ether, high over the Alps, to slither down above the pink almonds, and quarries and green hills and valleys and so revolving like a sheet of paper to alight by you all at Firenze! Love to all.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

218

To his Mother

35 PARK LANE,
March 30th, 1895.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am so happy and thankful to think you are better and (with many 'umberufens' and three distinct knocks under my table) I do hope to get to you. Of course nothing is certain—as we have lately been taught only too well,—but I have set my heart on it; I was stopped from Hyères two years ago

and on Peter Simple's theory the shot should not strike in the same place; besides I have had my influenza and I am blazing through the last pages of 'Plutarch,' against time and the printing press. The difficulty is to compress it; but I think you and Pamela will like it when it is done. If I have to cut out a great deal in order to get it in I shall publish it as an essay afterwards in full; supposing Henley consents. He is pleased with the ninety-three type-written sheets I have sent him, and the rest being only on language and expression is plain sailing.

Now I must stop as every minute counts.

My plan is to start Good Friday morning and arrive midnight before Easter day. Then if you are well enough we will go to the Duomo and see the Colombia whizz down the aisle; and the carrocio drawn by bullocks. 'Quelles Alouettes!!'

And so most darling and beloved Mamma, I hope to hug you in a fortnight.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

219

To his Mother

SAIGTON,
May 4th, 1895.

DARLING MAMMA,—I had a delightful day here yesterday. Sibell and I woke early and washed our faces in the dew. Later we drove about most of the day in the dogcart. We all go up bag and baggage (except Percy) on Monday the 6th. I have been put on the Standing Committee of Trade, which meets on Tuesday.

The night I left you, a week ago, was most lovely, old moon in new moon's arms, a shining planet like a pendant, and far away in the Apennines a glorious storm that kept lighting the sky with sheet lightning.

Enclosed for Papa. I have acknowledged it and promised to send it on.

With love to you all.—Most loving son, GEORGE.

220

To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
May 7th, 1895.

DARLING MAMMA,—I will have the candles and (without seeing them) feel inclined towards taking them as they are. But I leave that to you. If you think they will look better re-silvered, please have it done.

I am getting rather puzzled at having received no telegram from Papa. Meanwhile I say no word.

I am writing this on the Standing Committee in a large pleasant room, among interesting men, Asquith, Dilke, Burns etc., etc., and I like the work.

Late last night, on the top of all else, I got a note begging me, in absence of Lord Lansdowne, to propose the toast of Literature at the Royal Literary Fund Dinner to-morrow. The Duke of York will be there and a large audience, so I must buckle to.

With love to Pamela and all.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

221

To his Mother

35 PARK LANE,
May 11th, 1895.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I went yesterday to dear Pembroke's funeral. It was most lovely. The most perfectly beautiful day I have ever seen. And all things about it grave and reverent and lovely. He is buried in an open space under high trees by a little church, just beyond the gate before the avenue.

On Wednesday I proposed 'Literature' at the annual Dinner of the Royal Literary Fund. Duke of York in Chair. Houghton, Lansdowne, etc., and all the editors and most of the popular authors of the day. It really was alarming but I pulled through.

Am very busy on Factory Act in mornings; Welsh Church in afternoon.

Please order me a sofa, like Gussy Monson's and enough of the good green silk to cover it.

If you think the chairs *good* on a second inspection try and get them for 300 lire. But not if you think I can pick up chairs in London as good, for £4 a piece. I think them worth 300 lire, but hardly more.

Ever with love, loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother and Sister, Pamela

GROSVENOR HOTEL,
CHESTER, May 19th, 1895.

MY DARLINGS,—Thank God you are safe! ¹ Your telegram came, re-directed from Victoria Station, so I do not know whether you are at Florence or Perugia.

I do trust it has not upset Sybil's nerves or Pamela's. Certainly you do have a varied experience of the sensational side of life. How I long to see you all again.

I am here with Yeomanry but shall be back by Friday 24th. I wrote to Papa suggesting we should meet in Paris for Whitsuntide and do Chartres. But, if you go straight to Clouds and could put me, or us, up, let me know. I should be quite happy there.

Percy is at Saighton alone: he comes over to see me drill and so on, and on Friday I take him to London.

Margot Asquith lost her baby but is safe.

I have had no news of the earthquake but your telegram.

With all love.—Most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To Mrs. Drew

GROSVENOR HOTEL,
CHESTER, May 1895.

I am here for the Yeomanry; it is tantalising to be so near and yet not to see you. If by any lucky chance

¹ An earthquake took place at Florence whilst his mother and sister were there.

you would be in Chester Wednesday or Thursday, may we make an assignation? or shall I make a push to come over to tea?

I am so deeply grieved for Margot.¹ Her tragedy is the hardest of all to reconcile with the moral order of the world. My little Niece suffered it two years ago, but is now a proud and happy Mother. I can only hope that it may be so with Margot.

I knew nothing of the 'Florentine Drama'² until a few weeks ago. Of course *no* one is worthy, but everyone tells me he is a good fellow, and I have received a nice simple letter from him.

A telegram just to hand that they have experienced an earthquake, but are all safe. Pamela has a faculty for sensational catastrophes which is really out of place, unless in a novel.

You were so kind about the first beginnings of my introduction to North's 'Plutarch,' that I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy; the first two volumes should appear on Wednesday (to-morrow), and will, I hope, reach you on Thursday. There will be six in all. . . .

My first intention was to confine myself to the literary aspect of the English translation, as an example of Elizabethan prose, revealing a certain debt to the French of Amyot, and yet instinct at the same time with native genius. I felt, however, that some guide to Plutarch's historical maze and some slight sketch of his personality and environment were needed for those who never knew, or have completely forgotten their Greek and their ancient history. I have therefore touched on Plutarch's matter before handling North's style.—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

¹ Mrs. Asquith.

² His sister Pamela became engaged to Edward Tennant whilst at Florence.

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*To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt*HOUSE OF COMMONS,
May 27, 1895.

MY DEAR WILFRID,¹—‘Bis das, imo decies et centies’—I am overwhelmed by your praise: of course it is excessive, but I have not the false modesty to deny that I rejoice in having won such praise from you. It pleases me the more in that you select for praise the very field in which I care most to conquer. I have never cared much for prose, however excellent, which does not abound naturally in vivid images. Newman, for instance, though I admire his style, generally leaves me cold. The fact is that the Ciceronian tradition is an error in English, and the Johnsonian a crime. My delight in the Elizabethans and in some modern French writers, Taine, for instance, is largely derived from their use of imaginative colour, and I can even forgive Carlyle when he, too, splashes it on.

I concede the ‘salt and savour’ and agree that Section I. is not up to the mark. I wanted to cut it down in order to expand the others, but Henley stood out for it all.

I can’t thank you enough for having written your first impression, for even if you revise it, it is everything to know that I created it once.

My mother and Pamela return Thursday, so that I shall soon be able to launch the great Crabbet scheme.

I thank you again and again.—Your affectionate cousin,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

¹ In answer to a letter of appreciation of his Introduction to North’s *Plutarch* in the ‘Tudor Translation’ series edited by Mr. W. Henley.

CHAPTER VII

JUNE 1895 TO OCTOBER 1898

The Unionist Party in Power—'The New Review'—South Africa—
France—'The Outlook'—'The Poems of Shakespeare'

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To Edward Clifford

September 1895.

MY DEAR CLIFFORD,—It was good of you to send me the private impression.¹ At first, let me say frankly, I shrank from making any comment; partly because the subject is too dear to me, but mainly because it is and has ever been at once too large and too inscrutable. It is as if you asked me to comment on an impression of Summer or of the West Wind. From that sentence you will gauge my difficulty and the reasonable nature of my reluctance. To show what I feel, I should have to write a poem and one of the greatest poems. You would in your turn comment and say 'In the first place this is a bad poem and, in the second place, I did not want a poem good bad or indifferent; but nicely balanced assent and dissent from and to my comparisons and contrasts and conclusions.' Now that is just what I cannot do. The subject is too dear, too large, too intimate, too sacred; you yourself note 'an extraordinary pre-eminence as to desirability' and then hesitate feeling the difficulty of analysis and setting aside not quite confidently the explanation based on an 'aura.' But that is my explanation. It came to me once in a dream of such vivid intensity (at first excruciating but then happy in a light-hearted and large-hearted sort of way) that I woke bathed

¹ Mr. Edward Clifford after a visit to Clouds had written to George Wyndham about the impression that he had received of his mother.

in tears and yet smiling and wrote it down.¹ That was years ago and I have not the description by me. Roughly and briefly it was this. I dreamt that my mother was dying. I held her hand and Sibell was in the room. I felt the horror of her large life-giving life being shut in closer and farther from me, minute by minute, as approaching death paralysed her faculties. I longed till my heart seemed about to break, for any signal of intelligence. But she died and the desolation was intolerable and *she was not there after death*. She had vanished : and, at that instant, I felt her presence more immanent and enveloping than at any moment in my life. She was communicating with me though I heard nothing and saw nothing. Yet through some channel other and larger than those of the sense all that one does ever hear or see of the beautiful and fresh and high-hearted seemed to be pouring through me like a high wind on a sunlit day, sweeping over the grasses and pouring through the foliage of waving trees. She became an 'aura,' a wind sweeping rhythmically over a laughing but lovely landscape where there was no confinement. And as it blew on, herds and troops and cavalcades, first of fair wild animals, deer and the like, then of horsemen, came lilting and galloping in a rhythm of joyous delight going with the wind. I knew that I was not seeing or hearing. I was being swept through and yet borne on, by a musical fugue of animated pageantry. And I knew that she was not *making* this ; but that it was *her*. And I woke as I said, with my cheek wet with tears but laughing, the word 'What a Poet you are !' That was a dream full of Fancy as dreams are. But I could not write now, when very wide awake, without being fanciful.

Certainly she is 'not clever' like Lady Londonderry, my hostess. I think her always very beautiful and sometimes very witty. But humour not wit is her characteristic in the lighter vein. In the sadder vein, she is sympathetic but never pathetic. For she is always generous—I want to say 'Generosa' in Latin—magnanimous,

¹ The account of the dream as he wrote it down at the time is given in Appendix B to this volume.

always a giver, a fountain of inexhaustible vitality. That I think is really the point. Other people by their 'gifts' so called of Beauty and Cleverness seem to *ask*. It is you have to give. Their beauty and cleverness is exhausting if Beautiful; it is not that they are vain, that is, greedy of admiration. There are such. But I am thinking not of them but of her peers, who, though not vain, put a tax on your æsthetic perceptions so that they tire you like a great picture or statue. And again, if Clever, they do not seek to demonstrate your ignorance, but they put a tax on your knowledge. I have known really clever women who for purposes of intercourse are a desert that would swallow the Nile to give back not one blade of grass. The point about my mother is that she is always giving just what you want in order to give in your turn. Her gift is not consoling but fructifying. It ignores deficiency and elicits profusion. She is rain to the dry and sunshine to the cheerless for the purpose of producing crops. She has the serenity of climate, with the variability of the weather, but of weather that is always opportune. People in her presence feel like trees or birds at their best, singing or flourishing according to their own natures with an easy exuberance. This may seem too pleasant and nothing more; as if her influence were not sufficiently elevating. To that I would reply that she never seems to be consciously helping, still less lifting others. That would argue a consciousness of their being down and a confidence of her ability to lift. But there is no arrogance in her and apparently no perception of other people's failings. Yet she helps these, most of all; unconsciously, as a mountain helps those whose horizon is too confined by leading them to lift up their eyes. It is all one to her whether any has fallen by his own fault or, from no fault of his own, is travelling through one of those sunless gorges of life which we have all at times to traverse. In either case they are unconsciously led to lift up their eyes and after that to lift up their hearts; so that she is a 'sursum corda.' Sometimes the bravest feel that they are shut in by doors closed fast

for ever. Then her presence is an incantation which sings with the voice of the wind 'Lift up your gates ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may enter in.' God to her is, I think, pre-eminently the 'King of Glory,' and she has a peculiar gift for making this world glorious to all who meet her in it.

I warned you that I should have to be fanciful if I wrote at all.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAUGHTON, 6th November '95.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—What can you think of my silence ? I postponed my reply until my return here from visiting ; but—you will sorrow with us to hear—no sooner was I back than my little Percy was severely injured by a fall from his pony. His thigh is broken and alas ! very near the socket. Dear Charles, I cannot tell you what the last 48 hours have been, but now there is a lull in the fearful pain. I was more than an hour with him on the ground, alone, before help came. I can't think of it without strangling. Then I got him on to a plank and into a cart. His courage and beauty made it harder not to break down. As I carried the plank into the house, after all that pain and cold and fear of the unknown, he hailed Cuckoo with a cheery voice as he passed her. I cut him out of his little clothes and boots, for he would allow no one else to touch him. When the Doctors said it was his thigh, I broke down, but I pulled myself together, for I was the one person he trusted, and stood by him while he took the ether, and pulled his poor beautiful little leg while they set it ; and yesterday I held him fast with two hands for 14 hours while he rode out the storm of pain. His Mother, thank God ! was away until late last night, when the very worst was over.

Yesterday was more terrible than any horror I had ever imagined ; but, it brought us together in such a fire of agony, that I believe to-day, as I have never yet been

able to believe, that neither death nor any eternity after death can ever part me from my little beautiful child. He believed that my hands helped him and fixed his fever-bright eyes on mine with love and trust even as the paroxysms came on, calling out 'Hold me tighter, Papa, hold me tighter, here it comes.' Well, to-day he is not in such pain and I have never felt such gratitude to God.

Dear Charles ! forgive all this. I will write about your affairs soon. Though why you go off to Rome instead of sticking to Ellis, I shall never know. Tell me if I can help in any way.—Yours ever, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Mrs. Drew

November 12th, 1895.

I am delighted with the beautiful little book ; and delighted to possess a token from you. I want you to buy and read the 'Red Badge of Courage' by Stephen Crane. I have reviewed it for the 'New Review' of January with enthusiasm.

The last examination of little Percy's thigh was more encouraging than I had dared to hope.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, 13th November 1895.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I prize your letter and at once write to say that we are much happier about our little Perf : grateful, indeed, to-day, past all expression of gratitude, for we are over, and well over, the day I dreaded most of all. Yesterday they put him under ether again and re-set the thigh on a bent rest, in order to bring the lower fragment into line with the upper one which is pulled upward by muscles. I have been dreading this almost to the point of physical sickness for the last week.

Well! it was done *beautifully* by the surgeons, and to my unspeakable joy, he has had no renewal of the muscular spasms and pain. I never dared hope for so much, and it seems a miracle—is one truly. So now we have only to make him happy and to hope that in the end his leg will be a limb worthy of him. He sends you his ‘best love,’ and Sibell sends her love, and we are all touched by your letter and wish we could see you.

He is a gallant little fellow. After all he has had to go through he went into action like a hero, calling out ‘Good-bye, Mamma’ in a muffled voice under the mouth-cap, and waving his little hand to her with a cheery flourish.

As you say, we cannot understand these things, but I begin to see that Pain is the parent of Love. If there were no pain, or dread of pain, in the world, there would be little love. I felt my love of him roaring up to heaven like a forest fire fanned by a hurricane, as I looked on his agony.

But no more of this. All is now well, MUCH BETTER than I hoped, and the nightmares of apprehension are beginning to leave me.

I think Ellis told me himself that he had work and a salary for you. But every man must mind his own business, and I have no doubt that you will turn up in the Spring enriched with experience and curious lore of mediæval loveliness.

Take a seat for the *second* week of the Ring at Bayreuth, and let me know if I can assist you in *any* way. Are you reviewing books for the papers here? or writing jewelled descriptions of life in Rome? You ought to, for this pays.

I am in the worst period of authorship, viz: debating whether I shall transpose the start I have made with an introduction to Shakespeare’s Poems. The fact is that I am so disgusted with the work of the critics on the Sonnets as to be unable to write a quiet introduction, short memoir; Adonis, Lucrece, Sonnets, and am going in bald-headed for William as the sweetest lyrical and

elegiac poet, working up to 'lyrical discourse' and Sonnet 90, 'then hate me when thou wilt,' as the perfection of human speech. This all makes for madness and an undue consumption of tobacco. But, my dear Charles, what stuff it is! Lucrece and all. I had really never read Lucrece, but just listen to this—

'For sorrow, like a heavy hanging bell,
Once set on ringing, with his own weight goes.'

Only William has written like that, and this must be driven into the people who glibly quote Hazlitt's 'Ice-houses,' and wearily repeat that a lady in Lucrece's unfortunate predicament is little likely to apostrophize Time, Opportunity, Eternity, Sorrow and any other abstractions that suggest a good tirade.—Yours ever,

G. W.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

ALDERSHOT, 21 November 1895.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—In my last letter I complained of an uneventful life; but since receiving yours I have had too much news, bad and good, to write until now, when the bad has become better. All is well now, but, to give the bad news first, my little Percy was thrown from his pony and broke the thigh of his weak leg. Your letter reached me in the storm and stress of the first days after the accident, so I have waited until I was quite happy again to reply. And now, looking back, I am happy and recognise good growing out of the evil. In the first place, it has brought us even closer together. His mother was away and I was riding with him when it happened. His pony was fresh and bucked in several fields, but he sat it so well that I took pride in his pluck and dexterity. On the way home after galloping all round the race-course and when I was complimenting him on having knocked the nonsense out of his mount, the pony bucked four or five times running and finally gave him what

looked the softest of falls. I was not in the least alarmed until he said 'Papa, I can't get up.' Fortunately I had a groom with me, whom I sent with the led horses to get a carriage. But it was more than an hour before he returned with a trap. All that time Percy never cried, and when I covered him with my coat to prevent him from getting a chill, urged me to run round the field in order to keep warm. I got a plank from a sawmill and laid it behind his back and edged him on to it and slipped it through the cart with his head towards the back which lets down for luggage, and so we paced slowly home. It was altogether more than 2 hours before I got him back, but as we carried him in, he waved his hand from the plank to Cuckoo and greeted her with a cheery 'Hulloa, Lady Cooky,' and afterwards conversed agreeably to the surgeons while they put him under ether, like a new Sir Philip Sidney.

He had great pain to bear for 3 days, and insisted on my holding his hand all the time. I found that I had a mesmeric power over the pain, which increased until at last I could send him to sleep in the course of a few minutes. All this, as I said, has tightened the birth-bond between us. And now he is quite happy in bed with the bone well set, enjoying the best of spirits and enchanting everyone who is privileged to be near him.

In my character of 'Johannes factotum' I am at Aldershot doing some cavalry drill; next week I make political speeches and the week after I spend at Clouds. But all the time I am writing an introduction to Shakespeare's *Poems*, viz.: Venus and Adonis, Lucrece and the Sonnets. This has led me into reading a great mass of Elizabethan verse, and of contemporary essays on the 'Arte of Poesy.' Whenever I read such literature at first hand, I am convinced that the critics who have written of it, have never read it, but merely handed on traditional judgments, for the most part astonishingly incorrect.

I know that you think I should be better employed on

original work. But I find that I have a gift of keen imaginative appreciation combined with another of seeing the past as a whole philosophically, which enables me, as a critic, to say things that strike people as original. And this means a certain amount of recognition from men of letters, and the press, which would be denied on principle to original work. When I have made a reputation—if ever—I shall fire my own arms from that vantage with surer effect.

In the meanwhile I transcribe a lyric over the page.

I delighted in the story of your companionship with wolves and little foxes. They, too, must be made eternal in verse.

So soon as I have finished with Shakespeare, I shall prepare my translations for the press and finish the introduction with the advantage of a fuller knowledge of Ronsard and his friends' influence on English verse. Then I shall reprint the French 'Malory' and write an essay on XIIIth Century poetry, French influence on Chaucer, etc. The 3 essays reprinted together will make a prose volume, with a recognisable thread of connection running through it.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAUGHTON, CHESTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—Since you will have it so, so be it. There is a saying, '*bis dat qui cito dat*,' which may be turned and applied to the recipient. Besides, I should like to give you a gift more typical of my own self than a concordance. I do not associate myself with the kind of labour which issues in such tomes. I would rather express my personality and impress it on you by presenting you with some loose tissue of insane generalizations. If I can find one sufficiently chaotic, it shall be yours.

I have been grubbing away in the sonnets, for a holiday task, all Sunday. I find many indications showing that

the Bard had studied metaphysics : the use of terms as 'particular and general' in xci, but more subtilely in his metaphysical handling of the 'idea' either of himself or his friend. Read LXII in this light. He mistakes the 'idea' of his friend within him, for his own, and so dotes on a mistaken self.

LXXVII is an important sonnet. He sends evidently the preceding ones, dealing with beauty and decay, in a book bound up with blank leaves. His friend is to observe Beauty in his glass, read lapse on the dial ; and then on the blank pages, he is to enter his own observations on this theme.

In the light of this sonnet many subsequent ones shine out. All those in which he deprecates any ornate or newfangled treatment of such a theme ; the *infection* of false conceits, spoken of in the same breath with painting of the cheeks and false hair. These have no part to play with absolute Beauty, to be seen in the image of his friend's face. It is a mistake to judge the mind within by his friend's deeds. His face is perfect, therefore pure, absolute. Let that be noted and saved by art from time. So the tune of it goes.

Love to Edmund and Lady May.—Yours affectionately,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, December 23rd, 1895.

MOST DARLING ANGEL,—This is a letter of all love to you, Darling Mamma. Wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, glistening with crowns of love piled up by children and children's children.

We are all well here and happy : and on Christmas day we will drink to you all at Clouds.—Most loving son,
GEORGE.

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*To Mrs. Mackail*SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, 12th January 1896.

DEAR MARGARET,—I never see you now—to my great loss—but as an old playfellow and constant, though absent, friend, I want to say now, whilst I can think of nothing else, that your husband's *Latin Literature* is the best book written for some time in England or France—for a long time. I mean that it takes a *first* place in the general output of all literature in recent years. In its own class, of criticism ranging over the literature of a nation and yet compressed into a slender volume, it stands alone. I never supposed it possible to communicate more information than a Warton or a G. Paris, and yet, instead of a school-book, stodged up with names and numbers and italics, to slip a polished masterpiece into the pupil's awkward hand. Its rivals are all constricted or meagre; but the chapters of this book glide by like slim Greek maidens on a marble tomb, each bearing gifts in her hands. Inwardly, one can but laugh—and cry—at the wealth of philosophy and humour, and delicate knowledge of lovely rhythms and sounds, and human delight in mankind's passion, which he has enclosed in the agate casket of his style, only to lay it quietly by the wayside and pass on. I know that I am an archaistic barbarian myself, wallowing in the xvth century, hankering after the xiiith, and with a still ruder relish for the pagan horseflesh of the Sagas; but after reading this book I feel that I ought to burn what I have adored, etc., for instead of a plaster cast of the antique, he gives the strength and grace and reticence of Greece and Rome and yet, like another Pygmalion, introduces all the colour and fire of the Middle Ages into his image.

This is, probably, the most inexcusable letter that ever was written, for nobody knows better than you what I mean to say, and nobody could be more shocked than

he at my manner of saying it. But the Goth must be allowed to salute Cæsar with his own arms and customary gestures. I WILL beat my spear on my shield, for I began the book last night and woke at six to finish it this morning, and, at a great sacrifice, I have stopped reading it again to write this letter. I can only say that I feel like a Prince in a fairy story who has been given a shower of shooting stars in a crystal box, and that I am going to play with my new toy again.

Yours, with many memories of old days and rejoicings
at this triumph of the new, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, February 2nd, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—It seems ages since I heard from you and it is weeks, I am afraid, since I wrote. We have been going on very quietly here, secured from attack by the measles : first Cuckoo and the Laundry-maid and then on the last possible day, Lettice ; the consequences an immunity from invasion and an extra fortnight's holiday for Bendor !

Perf flies about on his crutches like a crane. The other morning I woke, hearing a curious sound. It was the little rascal who had crawled, sitting-down, all the way from his room and had lost himself in ours.

We have been having wonderful sport. A fortnight ago one of the finest chases I have ever seen. A ten mile point and then turning to the left another five mile point. I am sure that we changed in one of the only two tiny coverts we touched after going about seven miles, but we never cast the pack and had to whip off at the Dizles, an impregnable stronghold of foxes after running for two and a half hours. Last Friday we had one of the fastest gallops I have ridden. Bendor is going very well and is very keen. In the evenings he and I attack Euripides and Ovid with dictionaries and a crib to keep up with

the work of his division, as he is in for trials. On non-hunting days I write my 'Shakespeare' and have nearly finished it.

Mind you take in the 'New Review.' It is only 12/- a year and I am working like a nigger to make it a success. You must tell everybody what a wonderful magazine it is. Read the Irish story in January and February, 'In the Gates of the North.'

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON, February 8th, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am only just discovering how ill you have been. How naughty of you ! But now you are back at Clouds and must take great care of yourself. I had uneasy feelings, that at last made me write although I have been fearfully busy lately. I have joined the directorate of the 'New Review,' and am helping to edit it; this takes much time. I have also joined a new philosophic society in which Arthur is interested¹: and I am acting for Lady Frances Balfour's Women's Suffrage Committee, in the House of Commons. I get stacks of letters from Dover about ships and harbours and all these are but excrescences on my real work of finishing 'Shakespeare.' So you see my hands are full.

Little Perf is *much* better and Phil² is here painting him.

I love, love, love you and cannot bear to think of you being ill.—Ever most loving son, GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON, 9.2.96.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I mislaid your last letter and have been rushing about on several interesting quests which

¹ The Synthetic Society.

² Philip Burne-Jones.

I will explain ; otherwise I should long ago have written to acclaim the work you propose on your garden. Of course it cannot be done in one article, but two or three chapters would make excellent articles for the 'New Review' and I would suggest that Heinemann, who publishes the Review, would then in all probability publish the book and take care to have it properly advertised. I leave that suggestion for the moment to explain one of my quests : and you will see that the digression is a natural one. I discovered accidentally about Christmas time that the sale of the Review was declining and that our directors had done nothing and proposed to do nothing. The situation was complicated by the foolish quarrels and jealousies that mar so many brave enterprises ; editor, publisher, directors and shareholders having no feeling beyond mutual recrimination. So I asked them all to dinner on January 22nd, and, as American politicians would say, 'captured' the concern. It was the only chance and so far all has prospered beyond the bounds of sane belief. Windsor becomes chairman ; Charles Baxter the literary executor of R. L. Stevenson, C. Whibley and myself are constituted an Editorial Sub-Committee with full powers to spend money on a dashing policy for 5 months ; W. H. Smith & Sons, hitherto more obdurate than the adder to our publisher's advances, are themselves distributing 25,000 copies of a circular written by me, in packets addressed to their clerks at 650 Railway Stations. All this is most confidential, as I have dealt privately with each party in turn. But it is pleasant to survey the general result of much travelling and persuasion. It comes to this that I have got more control than anyone else over a Review which will now compete with the 'Fortnightly' and 'XIXth Century' on equal terms, and that Heinemann, Henley and the contributors are all eager to oblige me if they can. Through Baxter I have arranged with the proprietors of Maclure's Review which sells 120,000 copies a month in America, to go shares in highly paid articles, which will appear simultaneously in the States and in England. I think

you will be interested in all this on your return. Meanwhile if you can write or procure anything of sensational or literary interest, I shall be delighted.

The other sensation has been a sudden breach between Astor and Harry Cust. It seems to be the whim of a millionaire; for Astor demanded Cust's resignation and Iwan Muller's—the sub-editor's—without assigning any cause save that the relations between the countries were delicate. The whole staff has resigned with them and the town awaits further developments. There is a chance that some other millionaire may take over the whole body; but this is a sacro-sanct secret, which you must not mention to anyone—not even in a letter to Harry Cust. Some little services which I was able to render at the crisis have brought me also into the centre of this vortex. The two together may expend themselves in mere words: on the other hand, they may place my friends and myself in a very strong position so far as the world of letters and journalism is concerned.

You will also be interested in the scandal created by Purcell's 'Life of Cardinal Manning.' Purcell is accused of treachery, etc., etc., and the row promises to equal the uproar over Froude's 'Carlyle.' The executors have repudiated the life and promised another one. Cardinal Vaughan and W. Meynell have written articles in the 'XIXth Century' and there is the devil to pay. Some of the fighting will, I hope, take place in the 'New Review.' All this is life, although not literature. As for that I have nearly finished my introductory essay to Shakespeare's poems; and have been invited to write in '*Cosmopolis*' on the Ronsard poets at 30/- a page! '*Cosmopolis*' is a new magazine appearing in France, Germany and England, with articles in all three languages. I do not know where its promoters get their money from, but there seems to be plenty of it. They paid £1000 for six unrevised chapters of an unfinished novel by Stevenson!

Up till the alarums and excursions of last week, I lived here quietly hunting and writing, and have never been so happy in my life. Little Percy has made a good

My only chance was to get away from incessant interruptions here. Having set the dear Africans to work on getting some evidence I wanted, and awaiting the text of Shakespeare's Sonnets in order to put in my corrections, I had six days to spare and filled them, as I say, by working my old French Poets up into an article and getting two days hunting: one, on Friday, very good. I posted the article last night and am just off to meet Dr. Jim. I am glad he likes me as I like him *very much*, and should like to play the mouse to his lion.

Now for Easter. You may count on *me* for as many days as I can manage, very possibly from 1st to 7th and perhaps longer. I hope to have given the proofs of 'Shakespeare' their last touches by then and to be free for a real holiday.

With mountains of love.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,

May 5th, 1896.

DARLING MAMMA,—Whilst I remember it. Would you mind presenting a ham to my friend Mr. Henley? He is fond of ham. Address:—

W. E. Henley,

Stanley Lodge,

Muswell Hill.

After the Colonial Vote on Friday I mean to come to you on Saturday for rest.

Till then all love to you and Pamela and all.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,

May 6th, 1896.

DARLING,—Yes. You are right. And even if so much did not depend on this one question, it would be worth while to fight for the principle that people must look at

the big things rather than the little things and, anyway, at *things* not at the quotations on Stock-brokers' lists, and the pettifogging points of attorneys.—Ever most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

GROSVENOR HOTEL,
CHESTER, Friday, May 29, '96.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I claim the 'Arabian Horse' with enthusiasm, even though 16 pp. long! Will you send it to

W. E. Henley,
Stanley Lodge,
Muswell Hill, N. ?

I don't think Knowles¹ ought to be allowed articles on Horses; Gladstone on Bishop Butler is the fitting literature for him. Besides having given the public Arabian Poetry in the May number, what more natural than to go on with the Arabian Horse? The shade of Antar would object to any divorce of the two. But Antar, I think you told me, had no shade, content to get out of this life all that may be found in it.

Your account of Morris' health saddens me and makes me feel that we are all suddenly much older. For he was and is the leader of the world's return to its youth.

I may be in London Monday, but more probably at Stanway. In any case I am coming to sit on the roof and hear the birds sing soon. Perhaps, if convenient, on Saturday the 6th?—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Mrs. Drew

May 30th, 1896.

Thank you for your most kind words about the Farewell² . . . I cannot say how relieved I am to gather,

¹ Editor of the 'XIXth Century' magazine.

² An article in 'The Outlook.'

I hope accurately, from the newspapers that your mother has stood the strain which she bore so nobly. It made me shiver to pass her in the Abbey. Sibell intends driving over to see you during the next day or two. I leave it to you to say whether I may accompany her. I should so much like to see *you* and could stay in the garden so as not to make too many in the house.

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To Mrs. Drew

June 16th, 1896.

This is indeed a day of Jubilation. I dared not believe in my good fortune until your wire arrived, and can hardly realise it now. Sibell and I drove off to Mr. Henley at once in triumph. And the best is that the article¹ is of such deep and universal interest. I like the saving clause in favour of the young, and the true saying that every book must be a benefit or a burden. You will realise how directly the article appeals to me, personally; for I think you know I am often dissatisfied with the use I make of my time.

Thank you again and again for procuring me so much pride and pleasure.

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To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

July 29th, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—This is too bad! But I suppose you manage to get comfort out of the absence of danger. Convey my love to dear Dorothy Ditchmouse² and say I hope she will soon be well. I saw Pamela this morn and thought her *much* better; spry as possible and much interested in the last I had seen of dear Doctor Jameson. I was very sorry to say Goodbye to him at

¹ An article written by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone for the 'New Review' of July 1896.

² His cousin, Dorothy Carleton.

8 o'clock last night after spending most of the day in looking at and talking to him. I am really fond of him; a man after my own heart.

With mountains of love.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—We go to Arthur's.

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To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
 August 9th, 1896.

DARLING MAMMA,—I forgot the only bit of business I wanted to put before you this morning. As you know I start for South Africa on Saturday and I have informed Mr. Chamberlain of my intention. I have also told him that I mean to visit Pretoria. Now I want you to ask Lord Rothschild whether he will give me a letter of introduction to Dr. Leyds. I want to see Leyds and Kruger and I believe that a recommendation will be more grateful from Lord Rothschild than even from Mr. Chamberlain. He need only say that I am an M.P. of average intelligence, for some time Arthur Balfour's confidential secretary etc.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SOUTHAMPTON,
 August 15th, 1896.

MOST DARLING ANGEL-MAMMA,—Just Goodbye and all love to you, till I come back in November. We had a capital start. Sibell and Perf both of a golden goodness. Not one tear and more love than most people ever dream of. And you darling, you know how I love you and how I shall rejoice and dance for joy when I see you and hug you again.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
CAPE TOWN, *Sept. 2nd, 1896.*

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am very naughty and have not left myself time to write. But here is a line to say that I am very well and in high spirits. Lord Rosmead is more kind than words can say. You must write and thank him. I have a huge bed-room, with wide verandah opening on to a beautiful garden. He is asking everyone to meet me whom I want to see. Gives me a work-room in which to have private interviews and lends me his favourite Basuto pony!

The weather is lovely. Cold with gleams of sun as in early March at home. Sheets of fuchsias out in the garden, oaks just coming into leaf, ilex, palms, fig-flower trees, cactus and other wonderful shrubs with strange blossoms. Above all avenues and clumps of stone-pines. The last two days were very rough. But I was not sick and enjoyed it all. The outline of Table Mountain and the Peak and Robbin's Island through the driving mist more fantastic and enchanted than when the Flying Dutchman defied the Devil. Beautiful albatrosses swept round us for the last two days and Cape pigeons (a gull, marked black and white like the under wings of a tiger-moth). I walked yesterday and rode this morning at 7.15.

Politically my trip will be more interesting than I expected. Everyone is to be seen and all are gracious.

Mail going. Best love to Papa, Dorothy, Fraülein and all. And Table-mountains (not spoonfuls) of love to you.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Sister, Madeline

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
CAPE TOWN, *Wednesday, September 9, '96.*

DARLING MANENAI,—I thought of you so much on Sunday last: it seemed such ages since dear Babraham

four weeks before. Everything so far has gone like a day-dream, just as one would invent it oneself : a delightful companion in Bobby Ward, who shared a cabin with me ; another good fellow in Lord Ava : interesting fellow passengers, Lord Rosmead, Sir Graham Bower, K.C.M.G., Robinson (nephew and private secretary) Transvaal officials ; Kruger's grandson ; Johannesburg reformers ; Jews ; bookmakers ; actors and actresses ; and a crowd in the steerage mostly English and some Dutch, who sang their respective national anthems every night.

Then I was asked here to stay as long as I like and am in the way of seeing everybody who counts. Yesterday, for example, I spent the morning from 10 to 12.45 with a Dutch member of the Bond, and afterwards 1 to 5 lunched with and talked to Sir James Sivewright, one of the Ministers who manages the railways which, for the moment, are the political question out here. At home, I see by the papers, they still hammer on about Boer armaments ; here the excitement is all over the Free State, taking its 300 miles of railway on the road to Johannesburg over from Cape Colony, and over the taxes which the Transvaal has put on Cape brandy and tobacco. You cannot imagine what a delightfully complex problem it is ! To-night I dine with a member called Fuller, and to-morrow with Rose-Innes to meet Merriman. They are two ex-Ministers, the first a capital fellow, the second clever and Rhodes' bitterest enemy out here. I have also lunched and had long interview with Schreiner, Olive S.'s brother, who was in Rhodes' ministry and who made the great speech which carried the Report of their Committee of Enquiry through the House without *another* speech from anyone, so just and exhaustive did it seem both to Rhodes' friends and enemies. On Saturday I am going with some of the Dutch to visit the Dutch centres of old-fashioned farming on the Paarl. For the rest the climate is divine and Table Mountain a continual joy. I went up 2000 ft. of it on Monday in the 'cage' which takes the blocks of cement up to the reservoir they are making, in 10 minutes ! It is slung on a wire rope

stretching from one 'standard' to another on points up the mountain side, and pulled by another rope driven by a steam drum at the foot. It is the nearest approach to flying. The last two loops would make you squirm. At first you are only 15 or 20 ft. above the ground and each loop is not more than 60 yards, but the last but one takes you 300 yds. in length over a valley 150 ft. below you, and the last swoops up a ravine between two perpendicular crags. At the top you step into a trolley drawn by a mule to the reservoir. Here they have built a wall of masonry that dams the ravine till the water is 100 feet deep. I walked down, through the tunnel, 2400 ft., that pierces one spur of the mountain. It was wonderful to emerge in a steep rocky gorge, with oleanders and aromatic shrubs shimmering in the sun, and the sea far away beneath with its silver sands.

I ride every morning at 7.30, breakfast 9.30, write or see people, lunch 1.45, see people or walk, dinner 8. I sit at every meal next Lady Rosmead, who is exactly like Du Maurier's duchess to look at, very kind and most amusing in her outspoken criticism of everybody. She and Lord Rosmead have been too kind for words. Their daughter, Mrs. Dawkins, is with them, married to their Military Secretary, Captain Dawkins; a good fellow for aide-de-camp called Schilling, and one of the Walsh's, Secretary to Sir W. Hely Hutchinson, make up the normal party. Haseltine, whom I met at Babraham, has come down for a 5 months' shoot, and he lunched and dined once or twice. Ava and Bobby Ward have gone to Bulawayo.

Give my best love to Charlie and tell him that he would like to be in my shoes.

With fondest love to you, Darling Manenai.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

LICHTENBURG,

September 28th, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I think of you every day and of our walk by the Serpentine. Not only was I right to come to this country; I should have been a criminal lunatic if I had stayed at home. But I am not writing politics home to anyone, for the politics here are so interesting and complicated that it would take a book to sketch their outlines. I can only say that I have seen everyone from the High Commissioner to Dr. Leyds and that the pieces are beginning to fit into the puzzle. I have met also, Weston Jarvis and Ronny Moncrieff fresh from the fighting. One anecdote of our general, Carrington, delights me. When the Matabili, like sensible fellows, stayed up in the caves and rocks and kept potting our men, he said once or twice with surprise and annoyance ‘Why don’t the *fools* come down and fight?’ That is deliciously English.

At the present moment I am writing in the little guest-chamber of a road-side Inn on the way from Johannesburg, West and over the frontier to Mafeking. I started 6 a.m. the day before yesterday in a Cape-cart with four horses and a Dutch driver, and I have never enjoyed a journey so much. I have written of it to Sibell who will send you the letter. The country is exactly like Salisbury Plain, but on a greater scale and now, after the rainless winter, with scant, patchy grass as if on a field that has once been ploughed and lain fallow on the Downs. There are no trees except a few mimosa every four or five hours, and the road is a wide track, like the old sheep droves at Wilbury, but bare and baked a deep crimson red. I have told Sibell my adventures; getting lost, and not being met at the frontier where they stop the horses on account of rinderpest.

The birds, my dear! would delight you. On the first

day a sort of inland tern, just like a little gull and any number of your old friend the Widow-bird, looping about with his long tail just in front of the horses. Here he rejoices in the short name of 'Flop.' The Secretary birds are as good as a play, and wild ducks get up and quack like ten packs of grouse. Dear little mere-cats go scooting about and sit up with their brushes up like squirrels to watch you. I wish I had time to write, but I haven't! and it will be fun talking it all over in December. I start at seven o'clock to-morrow in the coach for Bulawayo *not* to see Rhodes, who will probably be off to Salisbury, but to see the country and Albert Grey. If I chance to meet Rhodes—no matter. I am not going to travel 7000 miles and miss driving in the last coach of civilization to please my candid friends at home. The coach is pulled by ten mules!

Bless you, darling Mamma, and best love to Papa and all. It is too delightful Guy having passed.¹ Thank Papa for the wire just given me.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE

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To his Mother

BULAWAYO,

October 15th, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am just off to ride south by Tuli, to the Crocodile river at Rhodes drift. I shall be met by other horses on far side and ride on to Pietersburg in the Transvaal and from there I get a good coach to Pretoria. I do not suppose that you realize the size of South Africa: for instance I am now nearly as far from Cape Town as Constantinople is from London.

I have had a glorious week camping out, sleeping under the stars, riding seven or eight hours a day, and swimming in the Malenia river. And I am certain that my visit to this northern land will be useful when I get home, which, with luck, will not be very long after this letter arrives.

¹ For the Staff College.

I was going to start at three this morning, but have put off till 9 o'clock. I have got a good man, Thackeray, to ride with me who understands the business. Of course I can take no luggage and shall look like a scarecrow by the time I reach Johannesburg in twelve days or fifteen.

I am so delighted at Guy's son and at his success.

And now, darling, I must pull on my boots. Love to Papa and Dorothy; so glad to hear of her being well.—
Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

I love you.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

AT BASE OF MATOPPO HILLS,

October 12, 1896.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—A newspaper has just come to this camp—the first I have seen for 3 weeks—and in it, with infinite regret, I have just read of William Morris' death. One by one the Stars are extinguished. Our camp here, about 20 miles from Bulayawo, consists of a waggon and a sail-cloth over a thorn-bush which serves for dining-room. For the rest we sleep in blankets under the stars. You will ask 'who are we?' And it is difficult to answer. Sometimes 5, sometimes 10 or a dozen whites are here, watching the last stages of the peace negotiations with the Matabili. This is a beautiful land; the happy valley of Rasselas ringed round with rocky mountains and watered with pleasant streams. I call it a valley in comparison with the fringing Matoppo, but we are 4000 ft. above the sea, with a fresh breeze blowing all day long. I ride at 5 or $\frac{1}{4}$ to 5 in the morn for 4 or 6 hours into the wonderful hills. Some are single bulbs of granite, others huge piles of boulders and long plinths falling into natural cromlechs heaped one over the other. And between are level alluvial plains narrowing to gorges and spreading out into amphitheatres 2 miles in diameter. This morning I came to a lovely spot which I call the grove of Daphne, a conical stone

mound at the end of a green valley, tufted with wild mahogany and other trees, the first with lustrous green leaves and scented crimson flowers. Beyond, after tying up my horse, I climbed 2 ridges, the second of solid granite, with a bald head and twelve boulders in a circle round its crown, a natural Stone-henge or temple of the Sun, from which I could see the Kingdoms of the Earth. You probably dislike Rhodes, but he has acted here as you would have done. He found the soldiers pounding away twice a week into these Hills, losing and killing men, so he went into the Hills and invited the natives to talk it over with him. They now call him 'the man who came between 2 bulls fighting,' and 'the cow who is given when the calf's mother is dead.' All the rebel chiefs but one are here! twenty yards from where I am lying, sitting in a circle round Colenbrander, who talks like a native. We present each other with gifts. They bring a goat and we give a hat or exchange our tobacco for their snuff. They are all orators, and after the evening meal steal silently in one by one and then deliver speeches, tracing lines in the dust with a straw to illustrate their periods. The soldiers look upon the whole business as sacrilegious and are very sulky over it. Carrington used to go into the hills, and after having 40 men hit without seeing one of the enemy, would exclaim in a rage, 'Why don't the fools come down and fight!' I don't know the language, so my own communications are confined to saying 'Saccobono' (Good morning) and echoing Babayana's single word of English, viz. : 'All right.'

Sunday, 18th Oct. '96.

After a long break I take this up again. On the 13th we had the last and largest 'Indaba,' 131 natives sat down and 300 were in the camp, where they breakfasted off 3 bullocks. I will tell you of the scene when we meet. Immediately after we rode in 20 miles to Bulawayo. On the next day I organised a ride which I had been planning in my head, having had enough of the coach journey up by Tati and Margove—it took me 7 days and

8 nights without once lying down. I determined to ride through along the abandoned coach road by Tuli South to Rhodes' Drift on the Limpopo, 180 or 190 miles, and to get horses to meet me on far bank (Transvaal) and so rode on 140 m. to Pietersburg and take the road there to Johannesburg. Well, it has been a great success, so far, for the Crabbet Club, as Hubert Howard is 2 days ahead of me and I hope to catch him this evening at Tuli.

I have made forced marches all the way, as the stores have been burnt by the natives and watering pools are far apart at end of dry season. I started Thursday 9 a.m., and to-day, Sunday, 9 a.m., have covered 131 miles, as they count them here, but I swear it is longer. Last night after 21 miles in the day, I had to rush 35 miles without water by the light of the moon, walking and cantering all night. But we got through to the water at Elephants' Pool, just a hole in a flat rock, and managed to water the horses by drawing up the water in their nose-bags. The experience has been delightful: rocky hills, gigantic banyan trees, sunsets and 'veld' fires, and a sense of Nature's re-conquest everywhere. For the road has been abandoned since March, and the big game have come back. A lion was heard by the last fort (70 miles back) the night before we passed; last night we heard a panther close to us, and at the pool this morning there was fresh elephant's dung. Flocks of birds came to drink there at sunrise.

I am very well and prefer this life to any other.

Give my love to Anne and Judith.—Yours affectionately,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

Monday, October 19, '96,

18 MILES SOUTH OF TULI.

The march yesterday turned out to be nearly 50 miles from Elephants' Pool. A Trooper sent from last fort to take back our horses, exhausted his own, and we had to leave him 25 miles out by some water. Feeling that I had succeeded and must get in, I dawdled and shot for the pot 6 pheasants, a partridge and a Koran (sort of

bustard). My horse let me canter into the bush to shoot from his back. As I killed a partridge by a river 2 great black and white flamingoes rose slowly from the green reeds. At sunset the scenery changed in the low valley of the Shoshi river and became enchanted by the moonlight, great palms and feathery mimosas looking like the spirits of Scotch firs. We got in at last about 7, and found Hubert king of the mud and wattle hotel, also a disbanded trooper who had been drunk for a fortnight, running about in his shirt. I felt that this was the real Inn of Romance, the Inn of Don Quixote and Gil Blas. It was delightful to meet Hubert, and we toasted the President of the Crabbet Club. I started again at 3 a.m. and rode here (18 miles), a clump of green trees by a stream. Have just eaten one pheasant grilled on the ashes and served on a fresh green bough. The birds are singing all round me; I can hear my horse snorting in the water-bed, and feel deeply how much mankind have lost by civilisation. My only book is a 'Virgil' in my haversack. I shall reach the drift and wade the Limpopo at sundown.

JOHANNESBURG, *Monday, October 26.*

This is a last sheet added, as you may wish to hear the end of my expedition. I waded the Crocodile in the afternoon after writing to you, but on far side found that someone had blundered and that no transport was ready for me. There is no telegraph and no population. By a miracle I found a transport rider at the store and bought of him 1 horse, 1 pony, 1 large and 1 small mule, and a set of four-in-hand harness. I borrowed a cart from the store-keeper which belonged to someone else,—called 'making' a cart in this country,—and set off at 10 p.m. the same day by moonlight. My team, naturally, had never been driven before and the off leader's first act was to turn round and creep under the pole with his head between the wheelers' hind-quarters; after that they all 4 tried to get into or under the cart. However, I re-sorted them and got off and soon had them well in hand. I drove them all the way to Pietersburg, sleeping out

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights; but only for a few hours, for the night-time was the best for making way.

My last adventure was to discover a rinderpest cordon of Boer Mounted Police barring the way just 30 miles short of Pietersburg. Luckily I heard in time and lay low all day, and then after sunset and under the shadow of a thunderstorm, I drove quietly through. Reaching Pietersburg—350-360 from Bulawayo—on Friday at 11, in 8 days; I caught the 3 a.m. coach to Pretoria on Saturday and made Pretoria yesterday—Sunday afternoon—coming on here by train. I shall soon go home, so please write to me there.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Ward

SAIGHTON,
November 30th, 1896.

MY DEAR WARD,—

During my voyage I have been reading Gregorovius' 'History of Rome in the Middle Ages' and Milman's 'Latin Christianity.' I wish someone would take these two old books and Zola's 'Rome' and write a brilliant article spiced with the Pope's Bull and Lord Halifax and recapitulating the work of Wiseman, Newman and Manning. It is all in the air and only needs to be stated.

We must meet soon.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 22.12.96.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—Your letter has but to-day reached me and I hasten to reply.

I am writing to Henley about your verse by this post.

And now I must protest against the melancholy that darkens your letter. You are not old; you have lived your life; you have won fame and are assured of remembrance after death; above all, you have won some true friends.

An excursion into the Desert will make you a new man and, to complete the cure, we must revive Crabbet at Stockton¹ to crown you once more for an 'ever-living poet.'

For myself I still keep the serenity that stole into my heart as I rode from Bulawayo through the waste. I know a certain cure for the 'mal du siècle' and shall go, like Launcelot, into the wilderness whenever the world wearies me.

Last week I took Cuckoo to a shooting party at the Londonderrys and enjoyed myself. You must be true to your own philosophy that every age of life has its own joys. For you have converted me: so that instead of resenting the new and strange respect paid me by some young sub-lieutenant who joined the Guards years after I left them, I saw for myself that the men who ten years ago liked my boyishness, were really getting a return for what they gave. That return I mean to get as years go on, and the best preparation for being friends with those younger, is to have been and to continue a friend of those older than ourselves.

I am trying to finish my 'Shakespeare' before Parliament meets.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, 28.12.96.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—This is a business line; not a letter. Henley in reply writes 'About Wilfrid Blunt:—

¹ His brother-in-law Edward Tennant was then living at Stockton House in the valley of the Willy in Wiltshire.

Will you tender an abject appeal for forgiveness, and say that between Burns and Byron ' (he has been editing both) 'and the "New Review," I have simply had no time for anything? But my intentions are strictly honourable, and, come what may, I will put the stuff into Heinemann's hands as soon as the holidays are over. I would write this myself, but I can't recall his permanent address.' Henley goes on to say that he is strongly in favour of including the 'Quatrains of Life.' I have often spoken of them to him and, as you know, in '89 I thought them admirable. Henley asks me to try and persuade you to give the quatrains a preliminary canter through the pages of the 'New Review.' I wish you would. It seems to me they would make an interesting 'Serial' in verse, that is to say that they would make a record, for the thing has never been done. Also, the appearance of 3 or 4 instalments through the summer months, would fitly herald the 'collected works' in the autumn.

I hope all things for you in the New Year.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, December 28th, 1896.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your presents are too beautiful. I had not got the 'Spectator' in any form so you will guess my joy at having it in contemporary binding to match my Fieldings and Richardsons. As for the St. Francis book, it is the best thing even you have done and quite lovely.¹ How beautiful silver is when not ab-used: And enamel-work seems as wonderful as pro-creation. When a 'plaque' like that does at last come out of the oven you may rejoice as over a man-child born into the world.

Best love to you, darling Mamma.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

¹ His mother worked in enamels.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, May 8th, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I must tell you about Perf.¹ He arrived in London with Sibell, Wednesday afternoon. They travelled up with Bobby Ward who told me that he left Saughton in fine style waving to sisters and the servants: and he has never had a moment's discouragement since. He said to Sibell some time ago, 'as it's got to be done we'd better do it the right way.' He dined with us and slept like a top. As a treat, I introduced him to Dr. Jameson on Thursday morning. Then we started off to Brighton. He threw himself into it as if he was going off for a week's racing: said, 'Fancy, I haven't even ever been to Sussex, let alone Brighton'; and was very interested in our recollections of early youth there. We lunched at the Métropole, and then went on to the pier, dropping pennies into all the automatic machines. We drove over after lunch and he delighted in the downs and the sea. I forgot to say that on Wednesday (after twenty minutes' waiting for Sibell in Woollands) he said, 'Well, I am lucky to be going into the country to-morrow.' At Rottingdean Edward was most dear to us and I feel quite happy to leave Perf in his hands. Perf was not a bit shy and quite natural; looking into everything with amused curiosity and capering along the sands by the sea. He saw us off waving his little cap in the air. Mrs. Stanford has, most kindly, written to Sibell to say he was quite bright even at bed-time; went to sleep directly, and ate two helps of mutton and two of pudding for dinner yesterday. So he *has* done it 'the right way.'—
Your most loving son, GEORGE.

¹ Taking his son to St. Aubyn's School, Rottingdean. The master of the school was his cousin, Edward Stanford.

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*To his Mother**June 3rd, 1897.*

DARLING MAMMA,—I have definitely settled to go as Palæologus the Greek Emperor who stayed with Lorenzo the Magnificent and is painted with him as one of the three kings in the Chapel of the Riccardi Palace by Benozzo Gozzoli. Can you help me? The dress, so far as I remember it, has a riding cloak of deep green with gold scallop shells on it. I must have boots sewn with gems, 'dubbed with great rubies,' and, I should like to wear a diadem. Unluckily I have little time to do anything before going to France. But I am free Saturday morning. Could we go together to B. J.¹?—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

35, PARK LANE, W.,
June 5th, 1897.

DARLING MAMMA,—(1) I enclose my measurements. I think my chest is rather bigger, say 38½.

(2) In case you do not remember exactly who I am, let this suffice.

John Palæologus II., Eastern Emperor, who landed at Venice 9th February 1438, met the Pope at Ferrara, stayed six months near Florence. Is painted by Gozzoli with Lorenzo as the Eastern Kings. Synod of Florence, 'Filioque,' introduction of Homer, Plato etc., etc. The last and fullest contact of East with West before the smash in 1453: the touch which gave out virtue to the Renaissance.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

¹ Burne-Jones.

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To Charles Whibley

35 PARK LANE, W.,
5th June 1897.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—Right you are. Lady Grosvenor and I will breakfast Wednesday 12. I fear that is the only day I shall be in Paris. I have one rather absurd piece of work to do there. London is embarked on the folly of a Fancy Dress Ball at Devonshire House. Everyone to represent some character and illustrate the costumes of the centuries. I am booked for Venice 1400 but, as a quirk, intend to go as John Palæologus II., who landed there in state February 9th 1438. I have photograph of his clothes 'selon' Gozzoli. Would Baron, or one of the Paris costumiers, do it without ruining me?—Yours,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

HOTEL DE L'UNIVERS,
TOURS, 11 June 1897.

DARLING MAMMA,—Many thanks for your letter. I have arranged for the crown and robe but not for the boots and spurs. Perhaps Guy Little could help me with these and the green tights. We are having a glorious time with divine weather. I must take you round here some day. It really belongs more closely to us and B. J. even than Italy. You must come with me some day and I will tell you all about it. The castles and wide rivers and screens of poplars and caves and old bridges and inscriptions and tombs and portraits of *everybody* are beyond! To-morrow we go to Lôches. To-day we saw Langeais, a xivth century castle with a xth century keep in the garden built by Foulke Néra in 990! The xivth century

castle is perfect with the chemin-de-ronde—machicoulie and all.

On Monday we go to Fontevault to see the image of our Henry II and Elénora who inspired the Troubadours and Arthurian cycle generally. On Tuesday a pilgrimage to De la Poissonière, the castle in which Ronsard was born.
—Ever devoted and loving son, GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Ward

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, 1897.

DEAR WILFRID,—I have read your ‘Wiseman’ lecture with great interest, but hastily. I shall re-read it with care. The instances of persecution within one hundred years of our own day are very striking. That a spirit of intolerance, so brutal, should have existed so recently, revives my hope in the Future. I have been a little dashed lately all round by our Parliament and our Press—not dashed as to the issue, ultimately, nor as to the joy of life under the stress of combat—but as to the prospect of any marked advance in the near future by the millions to recover the positions of an organic Christendom, once held by the few from Ireland to Constantinople. We shall not see the new Christendom ‘implemented’ by the Faith, Thought, Art and Learning of fifteen centuries. But your lecture makes me dream that our sons may, or our grandsons.

The next thing which strikes me most on a first reading is your effective re-handling of an image you have presented before—the contrast between the drill and restraint of a Church besieged on the one hand, and the amenity of a Church at peace on the other. There is no better weapon than a good image, variously presented.—Yours ever, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAIGHTON,
26th August '97.

DEAR OLD CHARLES,—One word of friendship and affection to go with the enclosed claim upon friendship.

Write to me soon, and Do come and see us. The Perf is at his very best and—let me write it with reverent thanks—he is riding again without the faintest trace of nervousness; galloping over the fields like Jackanapes, with his cap well on the back of his dear round head.

I have put the last touches to the proofs of my W. S. Essay and sent it off for good or evil.

Some of it will interest you. Walter Raleigh—Prof. of Lit. at Liverpool—put me on the track of Hoby's Courtyer, a 1561 translation of the Italian 'Cortegiano.' The ivth book is the most stately and beautiful exposition of the Platonic philosophy of Beauty which I know of. Spencer does but versify it in his 'Hymme.'

If you come, I will read it to you; it is a well in the desert and, I am glad to say, will be edited, shortly, by Raleigh for the 'Tudor Translations.'—Yours ever affectionately,

GEORGE W.

P.S.—Please return my other letter: it will work up into a note.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, August 26th, 1897.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—A long time ago (26th February) you promised to help me with my suggested Heraldic interpretation of two passages in Shakespeare's sonnets. Now is the time to redeem.

Sonnet XXXVII, l. 4.

‘For whether beauty, birth, and wealth, or wit,
 Or any of these all, or all, or more
Intitled in their parts, do crowned sit,
 I make my love ingrafted to this store.’

Thus the Quarto (1609), and I retain *their* instead of *thy*, which is Malone’s emendation, because Shakespeare would not have doubted whether ‘beauty,’ ‘birth,’ etc. were in the person he addressed. Of course they were. In the third quatrain he speaks of ‘thy glory’ and the second quatrain is antithetical to the third and first; meaning whether ‘beauty,’ ‘birth,’ wealth, wit, ‘sit crowned in *their parts* is no matter,’ for the poet ingrafts his love to *this store*—viz. : his friend’s worth.

Accepting my reading, or, rather, my interpretation of the Quarto’s reading, what are we to make of ‘*Intitled in their parts*’?

Is it an illustration from Heraldry? = Beauty, Birth, Wit, wherever they are exhibited as blazonings, are exhibited on the ‘parts’ of a shield.

Guillim—A Display of Heraldrie (1638) 3rd Ed., has a table of the ‘Science’:—The skill of Armoury is divided into i. Accidents, ii. PARTS. (i. Accidents are subdivided up and amount to all the Colours, Furs, and differences=Bordures, Files, Martlets, etc.). Returning to ii. *parts*, these are divided in Escoccheon and . . . (I omit the divisions which lead away from my subject) Escoccheon into Accidents (again i.e. of Escoccheon) and . . . Accidents into Points and Rebatelements: Points into MIDDLE (=Fesse, Honour, Nombril Points) and REMOTE (=superior=middle point of chief, Dexter and Sinister) and Inferior, etc., etc.

All this amounts to PARTS=the technical Heraldic term for the places in a shield.

So far so good. What I want to know is whether the other term—Intitled—is also Heraldic:—Did Heralds ever write of a cognizance or blazon (or whatever it ought to be called) being ‘Intitled or intituled in its Part’?

If 'part' be used here (in an Heraldic sense) I go on to Sonnet cxxxii, lines 10, 11, 12. After writing of his mistress's *mourning eyes* which have 'put on black,' the poet writes :

'O let it then as well beseeme thy heart
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace
And SUTE (suit) thy pittie LIKE in EVERY PART.'

I seem to remember that 'suited of the same' is a term of Heraldry. Is it ?

To go back to 'Intitled,' it seems to me that it must be a term of Heraldic art. Please compare the three stanzas of Lucrece beginning l. 50. These are explicitly Heraldic (l. 64, 'This Heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen'), and, l. 57, we read 'But Beauty in that white ENTITULED.'

Now I believe, in addition, that many more words in these three stanzas are Heraldic than some suppose.

52. 'Within whose face Beauty and Virtue strived
Which of them both should *under-prop her fame* (?)
When Virtue bragg'd, Beauty would blush for shame ;
When Beauty BOSTED * (BOASTED) blushes, in despite
Virtue would *staine* that ORE † with *silver white*.'

† This word is printed o'er in modern editions. To me it is evidently 'or.' Guillim, p. 20. 'Yellow: this colour is bright yellow, compounded of much WHITE and a little RED. This colour in ARMES is blazed by the name of OR = gold.

P. 18. WHITE 'is most commonly taken in *Blazon* for the metall SILVER wheresoever the same is found either in FIELD ‡ or CHARGE. The poem goes on :

'But Beauty in that *white entituled*,
From Venus doves doth challenge that faire FIELD †
Then Virtue *claims* * from Beauty, Beauty's red,
Which Virtue gave the golden age, to guild
Their silver cheeks, and call'd it then their *shield*,
Teaching them thus to use it in the fight
When shame assail'd, the red should *fence* * the white.'

Now, are (*) *boasted*, *claims*, FENCE, also terms of Heraldic art ? I seem to remember that 'fence' is.

It will be of great help to me if you will get an expert opinion on these issues.

If in Sonnet xxxvii 'Intitled in their parts' will not do for Heraldry, what do you say to Law? 'Of the first part . . . of the second part?' But I pin my faith to Heraldry subject to correction.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles T. Gatty

SAIGHTON,

4th September '97.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—It is good to have got a letter from you: but how much better if you would come before the good ship W. S. is launched! What operations might we not perform on the text with the keen instruments of your wit!

You get full marks for 'whether' = 'or.'

I had first put my money on 'entitled in their parts' = 'of the first part': of the second part, etc., in a legal document. But I am, now, convinced it is heraldic: Compare again Lucrece 52-72, marking 57-8.

'But Beautie in that white *entitled*

From Venus doves doth challenge that faire *field*.'

'Entitled' = 'entitled,' because W. S. *always* maintains the termination *ed* and elides the preceding vowel—cf. 'rememb'red,' 'murd'red,' etc., etc. There is *no* exception.

The 'Legh' whom you cite I take to be 'Leigh,' constantly quoted by Guillim (1610) as thus (saith Leigh) after many pronouncements.

I have other conundrums for the 'York Herald' when he returns.

Guillim's term '*stainand* colour,' for example. There seem to be two: Tawny or Tenne, and Murrey or Sanguine. They seem to be '*stainand*' because compounded of two 'bright colours'; and they are, alone, used in 'diminu-

tions,' viz.: marks of infancy. But what, anyway, is 'stainand'?

2. What was John of Gaunt's coat of arms, badge or crest? Did it contain any punning emblem of *gaunt*ness? I ask because when Gaunt says, (Rich. II, ii, l. 82) 'Gaunt am I for the *grave*; gaunt as the grave,' I suspect a play upon words, no longer apparent. I want the first *grave* to mean *engraved* coat, badge or crest. Can it? This because I want this meaning for 'grave' in Lucrece 198—

'O foul dishonour to my household's *grave*.'

Cf. 2 Henry VI, v, l. 202, 'Household badge,' and Rich. II, iii, l. 24, 'Household coat.'

I finished my notes on 'Lucrece' last night. It has been stiff work, for, barring Germans, of whom I 'am not taking any,' I have no precursors but Malone, Steevens and Bell.

My notes on the sonnets only want revision, and then, O then! I am done with a piece of work which has been a liberal education.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE W.

P.S.—Come and read Guillim with me, he is a perpetual joy. To him 'An Unicorne Sejant' (depicted like a pony balancing a barber's pole on his forehead) is no monster, no, nor even an 'exorbitant animull.' 'Some,' it is true, 'have made doubt whether there be any such *Beast* as this, or no. But the great esteeme of his *Horne* (in many places to be seene) may take away that needlesse scruple.'

O for the Age of Faith!

P.S. 2.—You know more of the streets than I. Now, tell me: when a gentleman's watch is lifted, do the pursuing crowd shout 'Stop, thief! Stop, thief! *Holla!* *Holla!* *Holla!*' I hope they do. For the word means stop. Surely I cannot have invented this? Will you 'ask a policeman'?

P.S. 3.—WHY did you never read us 'Hoo oor wee Baby was burrrnt' in Mrs. Ewing's letters? It makes me cry with laughter.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, September 28th, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—You *must* come here on your way South. I have not been writing to you because I have counted confidently on seeing you. Pamela sent me some of your wonderful letter from Ireland and I long to talk about it. The garden here is wonderful this year; a mass of roses and carnations. I want to show you three old pack-bridges of stone across the Gowie river and two tributary brooks. They are called the Roman Bridges. Nobody but you could paint them. You *must* come I am longing to see you. Cut Gosford short or, better, *out* and come. At least come from the 6th to the 11th.—
Your most loving son, GEORGE.

I love you.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,

November 14th, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your dear, loving letters are most exhilarating. I got here all right yesterday and feel like a lark escaped from a vault. I will tell you about Perf when I have received to-day's wire. *All* the doctors, including Jameson, whom I consulted this morn, say that what he has—'Broncho-pneumonia'—is most common after measles and that we need not be frightened. I agree, and it is all very well—only he gets *all* the things that are common after all the illnesses! Once in bed, he stays there for weeks, *always* :—for one excellent and ordinary reason or another.

However, I'm not going to grumble. We have had a good stretch of health and great happiness and must

submit to being hammered for a little—‘lest we forget, lest we forget!’

As to self I saw my Jameson. He says I have been poisoned and have had a bad drain-throat, and that I am well out of the hole. All my affairs are very complicated just now, for everything comes at once, and I feel as if a kind of eruption of Vesuvius was going on over my head. But I think of the Elder Pliny and his pillow and shall go calmly about one business at a time. *That* is part of Jameson’s prescription, you will be glad to know! ‘Never have more than one iron in the fire at once—live on roast mutton or boiled chicken and rice, drink Burgundy, milk tea (?), not more than three cigarettes a day, to spray throat with salt water. To sleep at Penarth the night before the speech.’ Those are my orders. I have got a big South African speech at Penarth on Friday, 19th. I sent for Jamie to decree whether I must postpone or not. He (knowing the animal) said I should never get well if I kept the speech hanging over me and that the worry of unsettling the arrangements and fixing them up for a later date, would be worse for me than the effort. But he forbids me to do anything else, or to go anywhere else. I am to sit here, toy with South Africa in my mind, run to Brighton if there is a fog, eat, drink, and spray, and go on Thursday to take a night’s rest before the Speech. Meanwhile I am to let the ‘New Review,’ and the Dover Carlton Club and my correspondence and my ‘Shakespeare’ and all else go hang!

So I cannot run to Clouds this week. But I long to see you. We have had a dreary ten days at Dover of darkness and anxiety over Perf and I want to wash my face and make merry and be glad. But it will be best just to wait till we are out of the wood and *then* I will come and Halloo! with you at Clouds.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—They wire :—‘Good night, cough better Doctor says otherwise no change.’

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*To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt*HOUSE OF COMMONS,
28.11.97.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I owe you a letter both by lapse of time and in return for yours, and because of the nice things you have written to Sibell of my former letters. But I have an ample excuse. The fact is that I have been up to my neck in political intrigue. With some experience, unguessed by the ordinary M.P., I can truly say that the last fortnight, and especially the last 5 days of my life, have been the most interesting and exciting. Some day I shall write my autobiography and, long before that, indeed, as soon as these particular combats are decided, I will tell you the whole story. Enough now to say that Africa, which in Roman days bore the reputation of ever bringing forth ‘some new thing,’ is no less prolific than of yore.

I hope you will send the quatrains for the ‘New Review.’ I am sure that those you read me in 1887 are among the good things you have done.

I have read a rather interesting book by Huysmans, ‘En Route,’—showing the religious experience of a ‘décadent’ who enters a monastery of La Trappe for a fortnight’s retreat.—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE W.

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*To his Mother*SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, December 2nd, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I came here last night to rest before the Actors’ Benevolent Fund Dinner on Monday. The rest are at Ashridge where I spent two days.

I saw my little Perf last Sunday, he is really well, but very thin and, of course, we must go slowly to work before moving him. After Monday I mean to take a real holiday, which I need.

I am so delighted that Guy has a daughter. I wish I had! So I have written to tell him that he must let me go shares in her when I am old. Love to Papa and Dorothy and Bun.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—I am here all alone with Spot [a fox terrier]: and the 'silence' is, as Lowell wrote, 'like a poultice healing the wounds of sound.' Also when there is nobody to talk to one cannot talk!

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To Percy Hurd

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, 4th December 1897.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,¹—I have seen an announcement of the change which strikes me as recklessly explicit. It is another illustration of the difficulties I have had to labour with. I ought to have been consulted, but of course could not get everywhere at the same moment. Do not let it alarm you. The title is not decided on.

¹ *Note by Mr. Percy Hurd.*—Towards the close of 1897 G. W.'s devotion to the political and literary causes which he had espoused in association with such thinkers and writers as Mr. Rhodes and Mr. W. E. Henley led him to promote the establishment of a weekly journal. The aim was to strike each week a frankly Imperial note on all current topics, and to preserve the literary traditions which gave distinction to the 'Scots Observer' and 'New Review' under Mr. Henley's editorship. Upon the suggestion of Mr. Alfred Harmsworth (now Lord Northcliffe) G. W. approached Mr. Percy Hurd, editor of the 'Canadian Gazette' and London Correspondent of some of the leading Canadian journals. The 'Outlook,' under Mr. Hurd's editorship, was the result, and thus began an intimacy between G. W. and Mr. Hurd which lasted until G. W.'s growing political and ministerial responsibilities compelled a lessening of other activities.

The extracts from G. W.'s letters to me show the zeal with which, as was his wont, he threw himself into the venture. First we have the minutæ of arrangements before publication—the first number of the 'Outlook' appeared in February 1898.

The policy of the new paper is the policy on which you and I are agreed. That is to say, we are pledged to an Imperial, British trade policy. For the rest, fair criticism and no stabbing. I know I need not elaborate this and shall not do so.—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
12 December 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—We went to Hamlet last night. I was determined not to miss it. He¹ is really good and she does well all that need be done with poor pretty, futile Ophelia.

I know it nearly by heart and yet it goes on 'surprising by itself.' The power and gorgeousness of the language is, *to* Language, what the Venetians were to Painting. Some of the speeches are Tintoret, Giorgione, Veronese and Titian rolled into one. Going behind language it is, of course, the first among 'Romantic' dramas, as full of colour and movement as a stormy sunset in Autumn. But, going behind that, there is Art in it, artifice, if you like, as intentionally balanced and proportioned as in any 'Classic' play of the French convention. Laertes, bounding in to kill the king and go to Hell anyway: Fortinbras, with his inarticulate action, are the subtle complements of Hamlet, without which there would not be Hamlet. And, diving deeper, behind, beyond, inside and all round, the whole is so interpenetrated with the raw material of all thought and all feeling, that sayings, most apt to a particular conjuncture, most beautiful in sound and rhythm, most delicate in illustration of character-contrasts, boom out with a relevance to the philosophic whole of human experience. What are we to do, or say, when Hamlet—who believed and, then, did not believe, in the

¹ Mr. Forbes Robertson.

ghost, in Ophelia, in everybody and everything ; a sceptic who cannot act deliberately and a bundle of emotion swung now to strike on impulse and, then, swung back not to strike—accepts Laertes' challenge, then suspects foul play and so, says :—‘ We defy augury : there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come ; if it be not to come, it will be now ; if it be not now, yet it will come : *the readiness is all.*’

Phew ! . . . —The Irony and Truth ! Here you have the whole of life. ‘ Fate, Fore-knowledge and Free-will ’ loosed at you in the most natural manner possible.

After talking for five acts, he speaks his own epitaph :—‘ The rest is silence. ’ And it becomes the epitaph of Man.

Well, one could go on for ever ! But this one won't.—
Your most loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—When I say that Mrs. Patrick Campbell ‘ does all that need be done ’ I give her the highest praise. All the other characters are complementary to Hamlet. The picture of life is focussed in him and you must look at the focus of the picture. If one of the complements distracts your eye from it he, or she, destroys the artistic convention of the whole, and the piece drops into pieces. In Hamlet, William Shakespeare looks at life and, instead of saying, ‘ Behold, it was good, ’ he says, ‘ Behold it was abortive. ’ Those who find in Hamlet's character a picture of philosophic irresolution are right, so far ; but, when they go on, as they do, to find an impeachment also, they go too far, and are wrong. He takes thought too curiously no doubt, but how about the others who do not ? Do they prosper ? Have they solved the riddle ? Ophelia is a good girl, takes advice from the proper quarters, is humble and loving, and just think what a mess she makes of it ! Laertes is a good fellow, prompt to act, brave, generous, taking no account of his own or of others' thought, when there is a piece of work to do. And just think what a mess he makes of it ! But if the good and subtle, the good and simple alike, fail—do the others prosper ? The clever villain, the old man of the world,

the weak self-indulgent woman, the nice young man—why they all go to the devil, each in his, or her, own way. Nothing is left but a dim guess at—‘Providence in the fall of a sparrow,’ a maxim that, ‘readiness is all,’ a conclusion :—‘The rest is silence.’ William Shakespeare will not have it that intellect is the wrong thing. No :—‘There is nothing good or bad but *thinking* makes it so.’ He puts Intellect on a throne. But on a throne encompassed by enemies and ruined by rebellion. There is ‘something rotten in the State’ of man’s intellectual kingship of the world. And W. S. will not have it that prettiness and gentleness are the wrong things. We love Ophelia as we love a flower. It fades and dies but we do not charge it with the decline of the year.

Is the play, then, morbid ? No. Because Hamlet’s philosophic irresolution, Ophelia’s futile prettiness, Laertes’ fatal straightforwardness, are all beautiful. So that W. S. says :—‘Behold it was abortive’ and adds ‘powerful, too, interesting, pathetic, humourous, above all, beautiful.’ That is what the artist has got to say.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
Christmas Eve, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—This is to wish you, Papa, Manenai, Dorothy and Bun¹ a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I wish we were all together, but it would take a barrack to contain your children and children’s children and children’s wives and their children, all of whom love you, whilst the original Five love you more than any mother has ever been loved.

Owing to those Pigs, the printers who struck, I can’t give you my ‘Shakespeare’ for a Christmas present.

Perf still coughs but it is better. I am reading the ‘Fortunes of Nigel’ aloud to him.

¹ Fräulein Schneider.

I have found a perfect place for your enamel—the square, white panel of the book-case which faces me as I write :—[a drawing].

Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON,
December 26th, 1897.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your presents are too beautiful. I had not the book of ‘Thel’; what a tribute it is to dear Morris that his work should be so closely imitated. I read the ‘Songs of Innocence’ last night. Blake was indeed a ‘Son of the Morning.’

And no one but you would have found the old box. The gentleman who used it must have been a heavy snuff-taker.

Perf is in general conditions of his chest much better but I fear it is now certain that he has got whooping-cough! Still what a mercy that we got him home in the interval otherwise he would be alone at Rottingdean. As it is he is very happy. Do you remember our whooping-cough and the characters in Hamlet? The tea and toast and Guy’s bad day?

Ever with all love.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

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To his Father

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, December 26th, 1897.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—The enclosed tribute to my prowess with the gun at Wynyard may amuse you. It is from Sir ‘Willie’ Eden, who asked me to shoot with him. As a matter of fact I am not really a good shot for I do not practice enough to shoot well, steadily all day and

every day. Captain Machell amused me very much by quite seriously warning me against sacrificing my life to politics. He instanced Harry Chaplin as a shocking example of whom better things were expected in youth. Of shooting, he said, 'You ought really to take this up. With practice you would shoot as well as any of them.' Lord Wemyss by 'the professionals' meant Lord de Grey, no doubt, but also the 'Young school' I should think, that is, Ashburton, Carnarvon and Grey de Wilton. They live for shooting and 'record' bags on their several estates. And, in order to secure these bags, they have abandoned most of the old precepts, shooting at everything near and far, taking the best places at their own shooting, being rude to their guests who shoot badly and generally destroying the amenities of what was a pretty sport by turning it into a vulgar and arduous competition. We shot the Saughton drive here and the gorse on Thursday and, after lunch, had a turn at the wild duck. There is a low wood with open ditches in it called the Duck Wood and a meadow between it and some open water. At certain times a great number of duck gather there and when this happens they shoot them. There is no feeding or rearing or decoying, so that they are shot at a moments' notice when the conditions seem favourable. Sometimes it results in a failure but on Thursday it came off, I suppose because the Duck had been driven there by the frost freezing up all the ponds in the neighbourhood. Some guns are stationed in the wood and three in ambushes, and two by the open water and one between them, set back against the edge of the wood. The guns by the water get most as they get shots at the duck rising and alighting. We killed 115 mostly teal. I was by the wood edge and only got very fast and difficult shots when the duck were flying full pace. I got ten, the Duke by the water about forty, Lloyd—his secretary—by the water, fourteen. Cecil Parker and Arty Grosvenor in the wood got most of the others.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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*To Percy Hurd*SAUGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, 26th December 1897.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—First let me wish you a merry Christmas and so to work.

Size. As a reader, I like the size of the ‘Saturday.’ It folds down the middle, can be held in one hand when smoking, double back with the wave of one hand, etc., etc. But, again, we must aim at individuality, so that our paper may be recognisable on the bookstalls. Would not stouter paper, as of the ‘Saturday,’ make the size of literature rather unwieldy?

Illustrated Headlines. I agree. For my own taste I could spare them, well. But I am sure they go down with the crowd. The Lady who exhibits the weather forecast of the ‘Daily Graphic’ has been a success.

Cover and Cryptic Sign. I do not consider that the one involves the other. At our conversation with Harmsworth I thought we concluded for no cover and a sign stamped, like a trade-mark, in the top left-hand corner, in violet, Japanese red (or old yellow). A pyramid, a weather-cock, a fleur-de-lis, a *swastika*—that is not a bad idea! According to O’Neil, (‘The Night of the Gods’) it signifies the apparent revolution of the Heavens and is found at Ilios in the spindle-wheels and throughout the East. He equates it also with the legs of Man and Buddhistic symbols. You ought to look at this book for the sign. In the first Vol. there are Fleur-de-lis and Tridents:— [drawings] combined with Lotus-flowers, and so on, which might serve our turn. My idea certainly was to have some such symbol stamped boldly in Japanese red or Violet or deep saffron.

I should like to review a book now and then of Elizabethan literature, French poetry, Arthurian and other legends.—Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

SAIGHTON,

CHESTER, 8th January 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I spoke at Leamington last night, and, consequently, found your two letters only on return this afternoon. To begin with the most urgent topic.

'Personnel of Politics.' My idea is, when the House meets, to get two or three men with an eye for the picturesque, the pathetic, the humourous, in personality, to collect such fleeting traits from day to day, and then for one of them to dish them up, or else to send the notes of their impressions to be worked up in the office. My ideal may be unattainable, but it is, by collaboration, to evolve a Sterne-cum-St. Simon rolled into one. Say, e.g., that we intend to paint the humours and humanities of political strife from *inside* the arena. Recollect that I have no experience in journalism and that my first attempt may be useless.

Visit to Town. I will come up, unless you wire the contrary, on Tuesday morning, arriving 2.20, and driving straight to 109 Fleet Street. We can then talk things over. I opened the matter to Alfred Lyttelton. He will, anonymously, do us some sketches of Judges from the inside. I have tried hard with the ladies, but find a great reluctance to risk the chance of being supposed to write of Society. All this points to the great difficulty of getting the inside view and, particularly, to getting it signed. Indeed, your Politics and Clubs and Society must be worked as carefully as the *'Junius.'* That leads me to express my doubt whether *'The Clubs'* ought to be one of our headings. I doubt it. Harmsworth thinks them interesting, but I have not found them so.

The Title. I am for *'The Outlook and New Review,'* and I plump for *'B'* [Specimen type for title], so does Lady Grosvenor, whose taste I respect. A. Lyttelton

preferred 'A.' My only suggestion is that, leaving 'Outlook' as in 'B,' we should put 'New Review' into a smaller form of the type that was—in red—on the last 'N. R.' ['New Review'] cover. The type on the 'dummy' recalls Grove's 'N. R.' not Henley's.

The Sign. I am very much taken by the circular label. I should like to get a design—as of a good mediæval seal—then on our posters we ought to have the same design in large. But I will bring the 'Night of the Gods' up with me.

John Oliver Hobbes. I think I told you that I met her and urged her to write. I formed a very high opinion of her capacity. She says that she writes *slowly*, and is much pursued for copy. Do your level best to get her. She might, if she would, paint modern society for us. She sees it with a certain freshness, being American by birth, but not by nature. Then there is Lord Crewe's sister, Mrs. Henniker, to be thought of. Certainly clever and can write.

Sub-Editor. Delighted to hear you have got him. May I say that your energy is making me sanguine?

Hoping to see you on Tuesday, and congratulating you most warmly on the progress you have made.—Yours very sincerely,
 GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, January 10th, 1898.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Percy has been *out* several times and seems much better. In ten days or so, I shall move him for a change of air.

Arthur J. B. is going to give my dear friend Henley a pension from the Royal Bounty. This delights me and I had a good letter from Rudyard Kipling about it, said he 'had been cheering all round the garden.'

I spoke for Alfred Lyttelton at Leamington on Friday

night. I had to, for he spoke at Dover for me in —96. But I managed it very easily, starting from Crewe 3.30, arriving Leamington 5.42. I was at Crewe staying with Bob Houghton. He, having broken his collar-bone, invited us all to Crewe on Wednesday and mounted Benny and self on two hunters each of Mr. Daly's best. Barring ourselves the party was mainly literary, Guthrie, Anstey 'Vice-Versa,' rather like an old Rudyard Kipling. Mrs. Craigie—'John Oliver Hobbes' a very nice woman. Sir Henry Cunninghame, who has just written Bowen's life, and Crewe's sister, Mrs. Henniker. We had a good hunt and plenty of amusing conversation.

Now I want to ask you if you know of the poet 'Bowles'—attacked by Byron in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' having written some verses to your mother? I think it *must* be your mother. They are entitled:—*'On Miss Fitzgerald and Lord Kerry planting two Cedars in the Churchyard Bremhill,'*¹ and run:—

Yes, *Pamela*, this infant tree,
Planted in sacred earth by thee,
Shall strike its earth, and pleasant grow
Whilst I am mouldering below . . .

Bremhill, near Calne in Wiltshire, was Bowles' Vicarage. He got the cure in 1804. It may prove a wild-geese chase for, if it were Grandmamma you would have known of it and told us at some time or other. Yet who else could it be? And if it was I wonder if the cedars are still there! We must look out the present vicar in the Clergy list and write to ask him. Henley found the passage—'Gilfallan's Bowles.' Vol. II. pp. 289-90.

My big South African meeting at Edinburgh has been postponed—Thank Goodness!—from February 1st to March 9th. So that, with 'Shakespeare' finished, I have the clearest month's holiday before me which I have counted mine for years. A packet of Dover letters, put aside, to work through and then I am free, like Ariel!

¹ Pamela FitzGerald (afterwards Lady Campbell) was staying at Bowood in February 1820.

So I am writing to you first on this sunny morning like a gentleman.

My new weekly paper is taking shape, famously. It will almost certainly appear on the Saturday before the House meets. I call it 'mine' for fun as I have no responsibility pecuniary or editorial in it. But I have built it—a raft out of the wreckage of the 'New Review.' I believe it will succeed. It is miraculous that I should have got all the money, editor, writers, that I wanted, with so little trouble. One keeps on reaping the harvest of past sowings which, at the time, seem barren or blighted. But for my connection with the old 'National Observer,' there would have been no 'New Review' and, but for my connection of three years with the 'New Review,' there could be no 'Outlook and new Review' price 3d.

I am longing for my 'Shakespeare'—not that I shall read him!—but to give him to you.

Love to you all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—The Dean of Chester is so delighted with your enamels that he wants to borrow them for a loan exhibition of Arts and Crafts!

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To Wilfrid Ward

SAIGHTON,

January 13th, 1898.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I have been putting off a letter to you until I was in a position to write at large on the 'Wiseman.' But I must wait for that a day or two longer. I cannot praise the book too highly. I am within forty pages of the end. Up to the present I still put Chapter VI. first. It is a most luminous essay on a great feature of past national life which has been almost uniformly distorted by ordinary historians. If I may compare great things with the infinitely small I must say that some of the great Cardinal's proceedings remind me of my own. That, at any rate, proves that he is painted like a human being. It is always to the credit

of an author when ordinary men discover the only human traits they know at first hand—their own—in one of his creations or subjects.

I sometimes feel that you and others are, consciously or unconsciously, giving effect to the 'Zeitgeist.' In making Englishmen see the Romantic Truth of the Past which they ignore and much of the Present over-sea which they neglect, you all seem to me to be obeying an instinct. Some Power calls you to prod the English out of their self-centred complacency. You feel it almost a duty to teach that—'a fond attachment to the past is a very different idea from a slavish adoration of the present.'

I met Mrs. Craigie—John Oliver Hobbes—the other day at Lord Crewe's. She is a Catholic and you might do worse than read her last book—'The School for Saints.' Disraeli is in it and it is obviously modelled on some of his work, but it is the work of an active mind, bent on prodding the English.

—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 14.1.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,¹—*The 'Cockpit' [of Politics] Tag.* This has proved hard to find. You might take:

'To one that promised to give him hardy cocks that would die fighting, "Prithee," said Cleomenes, "give me cocks that will kill fighting."'—*Plutarch*. Or else, 'This beats cock-fighting.' On the whole, I prefer:

'No quarrel, but a slight contention.'

SHAKESPEARE (*Henry VI.*, I. ii. 6).

I should only print 'Shakespeare' without the reference.

¹ It was proposed to attach quotations to give point to various sections of the journal.

The Provinces' Tag. Here I think we have the very thing from Oliver Wendell Holmes :—

‘The axis of the earth sticks out visibly through the centre of each and every town or city.’

You might like to add the Cheshire proverb of which I spoke :—

‘She hath been at London to call a strëa a straw and a waw a wall.’—*Cheshire Proverb.*

For our article on the Colonies and the Empire, if needed—

‘There are no points of the compass in the chart of true patriotism.’—*Winthrop.*

But I should not give his name.—Yours very sincerely,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 20.1.98.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I am writing to Henley as I may not see him for a fortnight. It is a great disappointment to me. I certainly thought the book would have come out long ago. I am sending on the operative parts of your letter—the request and proposal—without comment, for my own inclination is in favour of the selection very carefully made by myself. I cannot, however, deny but that your request is reasonable.

I have been hunting lately and enjoying it more than ever. Bendor is a charming companion and goes well.

Sibell sends her love. We are all well again now and very happy together, so that the prospect of returning to Westminster instead of riding and writing here, is more than usually distasteful to me.

I hope you will not run any risks either of massacre or exposure.

The ‘New Review’ is no more. But I have constructed a raft out of the wreck—a weekly paper to be called ‘The

Outlook,' and to be published at 3d. My idea is that with the 'National Observer' gone, Hulton dead, and the 'Saturday,' under Harris, becoming more and more extravagant, there is room for a weekly paper of Politics, Literature and Art. I wish you would write an account of your 'massacre' last year, or of your expedition to the Red Sea, or of your garden, for it. Of course it will only hold short things, 2 columns to 3 of the 'Spectator' size. We publish our first number on Feb. 5th.—Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 23.1.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I woke early this morning with my mind already turning on this theme. Harmsworth's words often repeated:—'Dash it all down on the first six numbers,' kept recurring to me. But it is for you to decide all such questions, and, in offering my conclusions, I must remind you that I incline by temperament towards an 'advance in line.' So discount when necessary.

I cordially attend to the advice that we ought not to fritter money on preliminary advertisement, in advertisement columns, but that we ought to strike a clear note loudly on two days at the eve of our appearance. I incline towards the 4th and 5th. And, if it does not cost much, should like the notice of the 4th to begin '*To-morrow*, Feb. 5th.' The notice of the 5th, '*On this day*, Feb. 5th.' A mere date does not suggest immediately to everyone. '*To-morrow*' and '*On this day*,' or '*To-day*,' do so. I have noticed this, as a fact of experience, in respect of special theatrical performances, say, of Henley's '*Admiral Guinea*.' When you see merely a date, the name of the month suggests that there is plenty of time and no hurry; the numeral of the day suggests, as a rule, nothing. But '*this week*,' '*next Saturday*,' '*to-morrow*,'

‘to-day,’ elicit the response ‘By Jove, I’ll go!’ or ‘I’ll buy that paper and see what it’s like.’

Who is going to write the Political leader for the first number? It ought to be a good one. The line, I think, quiet praise of the leader, without distinction of party. Balfour, Beach, Asquith, for their lead over China, and quiet praise of the people for keeping still and fixing their eye on their leaders. I should follow with an expression of hope that the same tone might permeate other questions. *Egypt*. The instinct of the people is for steadily pushing to Khartoum without fear, and the people are right. *India*. Is there really much at issue between the two sides? Are we not all agreed that we have two objects, (1) to safeguard the Ameer in his monarchy, to which we are pledged by treaty; (2) To know what is going on among the fringe of wild hill tribe which engirdle the empire we are bound to protect. Is not the only point of difference whether one step taken to effect (2), viz.: occupation of Chitral, was a wise step? And since it was taken on the advice of the Viceroy and his council, is not that a matter rather for the future historian of Lord Elgin’s administration than for academic debate? *South Africa*. We see people trying to solve the question solved by our grandfathers, but complicated (1) by dualism of race for which not a parallel but an illustration might be drawn, as to discontent, from parts of Ireland, and, as to language, from parts of Wales; (2) proximity to independent or semi-independent States on the same continent. For this no parallel or even illustration in past difficulties at home. Just imagine what it would be if any great European Power could hold diplomatic and commercial relations with an industrial portion of England, say the black countries, cut off by parchment autonomy and tariff walls. Towards all these problems a patient spirit of self-respect and concentration on points of agreement seem the right attitude for the B. P.

(Last paragraph). Yes, but the ministerial programme is local government for Ireland and Army Reform. True. We must, like any public man, even when engaged on

lofty themes, find time to pull up arrears of work in our domestic economy, and to insure a house over our heads.

Could you get this written and let me edit it? Written of course by the writer in his own way, with his own amplifications and illustrations.

Who is going to 'make our bow' to the Public explaining our intentions and the methods we mean to pursue?

I think we should make our title 'The Outlook.'

We must look *ahead* because the pace has increased and the volume of traffic. We have too often been caught napping. 'Eyes in the boat' is all very well as a maxim at Henley, with a course cleared by the Thames Conservators, but of no possible use to a ship making the port of London.

And we must look *outwards*. There is a time for all things, even for introspection. But not when you are engaged on practical adventures which demand hand, and eye, and nerve.

In Letters and the Arts we may, if the experience of history is not to play us false, expect developments following on these years of national expansion. We must look out for these. We are alive again, and strong, not Arnold's 'Weary Titan,' but once more Milton's 'Eagle renewing her mighty youth.' It will be strange if in literature, the drama and the arts, there be no correlated developments of aptitude and vigour. Therefore in our criticism of the leaders of the race, in politics, in literature, in the arts, we shall endeavour to follow the very difficult advice of Coleridge to discover the good rather than the evil. He gives it as his 'advice to the young,' but it is the hardest to follow. For the bad is the obvious. Any fool can pick the worst horse in a show-ring, but how many can find the prize-winner except by the laborious process of rejecting the worst again and again, until but one horse is left? It is a freak of recent criticism that those who pride themselves most ostentatiously on their aloofness from the obvious, spend their energy in spotting nothing else.

If we had to deal with death and corruption, it might,

for lack of any other employment, be worth our while to study and analyse the opalescence of decay. But we have before us the renewed quest of the British Empire—‘the spread and consolidation of the sea—commonwealth of Free Peoples.’ This may be boastering and untutored, but it is very much alive and very young.

Somewhat similarly in Commerce and Finance, we shall seek after a positive and accurate statement of the hopes and prospects of enterprise all the world over. This will leave little of time and of space for the discussion of academic principles. These, after all, are but deductions, drawn fine by degrees, from quite other conditions of commerce and finance which obtained a hundred years ago. If we are ever to draw deductions from the commerce and finance of our own day, we must first understand them. The cosmopolitan financier is a new factor in industrial enterprise. We have got to understand him and his work before we judge of either. Otherwise we may fall into error akin to that of the Middle Ages when an abstract blend of Aristotle and the New Testament led to the condemnation of all interest upon capital.

I just throw out these suggestions. Of only one thing am I sure; that we ought to come out with some explicit profession of aim and methods.

I hope Wednesday may prove convenient to you.—
Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Father

SAIGHTON,

CHESTER, *January 24th*, 1898.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—The writer of the attack on Murray—Herbert Paul—is a very clever fellow. He was in Parliament, a Liberal, but was unexpectedly beaten for a division of Edinburgh by Sir Lewis M'Iver. I forgot that he praised Mure but, as he did, I am sure Mure must be worth buying. He and I were pitted against each other more than once over the Home Rule Bill in —93.

We were 'young men of promise' who spoke just before or just after the Dinner Hour. It used to console me to think that he was the older by ten years and now he is out of it.

I have had the best average sport with hounds which I ever remember. Last Friday made the 9th good day running and the eleventh out of twelve. But my three horses are still sound whereas *all* the Eaton horses are lame, and Gordon, late of the 12th, tells me he has six cripples. On Monday we had a very fine hunting run with Wynne. Found in the valley eight miles off and ran a ring up the hills over Broxton and round by Carden then, hunting slowly, much the same ring—a big one over wild and varied country. The second time round I rode cunning but kept in within easy hail on the inside. As we got to the edge of the Garden coverts I said to Dugdale that there was a holding scent and that, when that was the case, I always kept in touch and saved my horse. The words were hardly out of my mouth when the fox, finding, I suppose, that he could not shake off the hounds left the coverts and struck out right across the vale about two and a half miles over a beautiful country and then, turning sharp to the right took us the whole breadth of the cream of the vale three and a half miles, faster and faster, till we ran him from scent to view and killed about a mile and three quarters from Saighton. I led the left contingent all the time and, absolutely, for about twenty minutes, pulling up third at the end. On Tuesday we found at Cholmondeley and had a four mile point to ground, racing pace. Found again and ran round and round in the park and 'Moss' of fir trees—very fast, the fox trying to get away, but twice headed. At last away and very fast for ten minutes, then slow hunting to Wrenbury Moss four miles from Cholmondeley. There he paused, perhaps ten minutes and then thirty-seven minutes over a divine country, twenty of them racing. We checked, and as it was dark, whipped off.

On Thursday I had to stay in to receive Princess Louise at Saighton. On Friday with Wynne, we had a three

mile point very fast and killed in the open and, in the afternoon, a long hunt, some of it fast—three bursts—over a beautiful country. On Saturday I had a good shoot at Eaton. I dined Wednesday at Eaton and was put next Princess Louise. She told me that the Prince had been very much taken with Mary at Chatsworth:—‘So good for him’—rolling her ‘r’s’—‘he sees too much of the same people.’ (I find there is only one ‘r’ in this sentence but they invent them.) They came over as I said, on Thursday and we showed them all our cabbages in the garden. On Friday we dined again and the Princess talked to me after Dinner. She is a splendid Imperialist, all for Rhodes and expansion—at least to me!

We must meet about the opening of Parliament as you are coming up. I am dining with the ‘United Club’—I am on the Committee—on Wednesday 9th to hear Colonel Dyer on Unions and Strikes. If that would amuse you I could take you as a guest. There is a discussion after the speech. Perf goes back to school on the 7th. He came out shooting with me on Saturday and was most interested and wise. He never loses his head, or speaks when the game comes fast. I remember that I had not the same self-control in South Grove at Wilbury. He was most pleased when I got three jays, two right and left. At another stand I got about fifty rabbits and twenty pheasants. He squatted on the ground with his eyes gleaming, but never spoke. I have just finished reading the ‘Fortunes of Nigel’ aloud to him. He was very much surprised to find the whole plot ‘fit in’ at the end. Bendor has been a delightful companion out hunting, riding very hard and quoting ‘Jorrocks’

The Parson’s letter is very typical. He has been there thirty years and your letter may have been the event of his life. But consider the case of Bremhill during the XIXth century! Bowles for 41 years and Eddrup for thirty! Meanwhile Wiseman, Pusey, Newman, Manning, Spurgeon, Voisey (?), Father Ignatius, Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, have passed over the stage unperceived.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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To Percy Hurd

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 27.1.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—Keep pegging at me. It is the only way! Have at my grey hairs whenever you feel disposed.—Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Father

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, January 27th, 1898.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Our amazing sport continues:—thirteen good days out of my last fourteen, and, on the days I could not hunt, it is the same story. We are having from one to two runs *every* day which, in a bad year, would be runs of the season and, in a good year, talked of for three weeks.

Last Friday we had a capital day with Sir Watkin, a fast twenty minutes and kill in the open. And, in the afternoon, an hour over the best of the vale, whipping off at dark.

On Monday I did not hunt, but the North pack, (Ennis-killen) had a seven mile point. On Tuesday I hunted with Corbet at Wrenbury and we had, perhaps, the best day's fox-hunting I ever remember, thirty-eight minutes to ground, five mile point, but eight as we ran without touching a covert or checking once. Then, twenty-eight minutes steeple-chasing, four and a half mile point, and killed. Then sixty-two minutes hunting run, five mile point and killed him fair as he tried to jump the haha into Dorfold. Wednesday, I did not hunt but Ennis-killen had fifty-five minutes $6\frac{1}{4}$ point and killed in the open. To-day—I am just in. We ran for more than an hour in the morning over a very big country. Then a very fast ring, unspoilt by the tail as, at the farthest point,

we jumped the Gowie. This was from Crow's-nest. Dear old Novelty had had nearly enough but, as we were to draw Handley gorse, one of our best coverts, not drawn, owing to the sport, for six weeks, I went on meaning to pull up if they ran away from home. Well, it was ideal. The field of three hundred had melted to forty of the best. The fox went away in the best direction and we raced a four-mile point, five as we ran, without touching a covert, crossing a plough or going down a road, to within fifty yards of my stable! There they checked and I, of course, pulled up as did Wengy Jones, Bertie Corbet and Shrewsbury. Indeed I had had some difficulty in nursing Novelty over his 'leps.' He carried away one stile and turned over at a stiff bull-finch with a wide ditch (or narrow brook) beyond. But everyone was in the same case except Court and Featherstone who had only got on their second horses at Handley. The hounds, however, hit it off and raced away for the 'drives.' As these cannot hold a fox they may have gone to Carden or back to Handley for all I know.

There has not been a season approaching to this since —88-89 and this is much the best of the two. A point of humour is added to the fun by some three or four of the men who don't go a yard having written to Corbet to suggest that he was getting old and ought to have a huntsman! The old man is going better than ever. I can't say how much I am enjoying it with the chastening reflexion that if ever such a season comes again it will find me ten years older.

The pace in these runs has been most exhilarating. In the fast 25 min. and kill on Tuesday, the first flight of five or six all jumped iron rails abreast rather than open a gate and then flew the Cholmondeley brook really with our stirrup-irons touching. I shall not be sorry to give my horses a rest.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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*To Percy Hurd*SAIGHTON,
30.1.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—You are driving the ‘willing horse.’ This is the situation. I have, besides all my other work, to deliver a lecture on Elizabethan Adventurers on Wednesday the 16th. For that I must read up a good many books and then write the lecture. I have four public functions, or five, between this and the 17th. I have refused to take the last meeting on the eve of the poll at Wolverhampton. All this points to the prime necessity of your finding an ‘understudy’ in Walford Green, or another.

I undertake, however,

(1) To finish ‘Society.’

(2) To do the parts on ‘Mover and Secunder.’

(3) To write to Müller.

(4) To give you the whole of Wednesday, from 10.30 a.m. on.

I cannot undertake Gladstone until after February 17th. I have read half of W. [William] Silence, and will try to let you have him on the 7th, by writing all next Sunday, but I cannot guarantee delivery. That is a fair compromise.
—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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*To his Father*SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, January 31st, 1898.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Just in from a ‘record’ run. Found at Philo by Oulton, three miles over Oulton brook, fast to Calveley, checked, hit it off and ran without a check, crossing the railway at Aston, past Poole, over the brook, past Hurleston—we were now five miles into Corbet’s country, here a long check. But having come

seven and a half miles as the crow flies, about nine as we ran, only seventeen or so came up. Then on to Wrenbury and across Sound Heath, ten miles as the crow flies. Turned to left and ran three miles as crow flies, swam the canal and lost by Nanturch. The longest point ten miles, about seventeen as we ran without touching a covert over the best country.

The horses were all quite beat. The 1st whip shut up before Poole, and the huntsman borrowed a horse. The Poole brook was very forbidding to tired horses but I managed to give the huntsman a lead over it. At Ashton the railway gates were locked. We smashed the padlocks with our stirrup-irons. But five had found open gates to the right. I caught them first on old Anthony. Found only three with the hounds and two riding fairly level but wide to the left. During the slow hunting after Hurleston, some more came up, but not more than forty at the outside, out of a field of three hundred. At the very end we had solemnly to jump rails on the canal bank in order to get on. Dear Tony arched first his forelegs over, then his hind, one by one! But he is all right in a warm box at Banbury. John Gordon is putting him up. He lent me a capital hack on which I cantered home along a good road by the light of the moon. I was nineteen miles from home at Nantwich.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

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To Percy Hurd

SAIGHTON,
CHESTER, 5.2.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I was very tired this morning, for a close Philosophic discussion is rather exhausting at the end of three hard days of work.

A good article might be written on A. Forbes' 'Nap. III' bracketed with M'Carthy's 'Gladstone.' That is an article dealing with the subject matter rather than the book, on the old 'Quarterly' plan but brought up to date.

Or one on Dramatic Conventions? If the writer felt

able to recognise that some of Ibsen's effects, however new, are conventions, and then contrast them with other conventions, e.g. the empty room into which people enter, with the butler and maidservant who let the audience 'into the know.' It is a whimsical but a good point to consider how natural and yet operative this must have seemed to the man who first hit on it.

Or again, take the fact that people are undeniably 'bored' by a plot just now. Not the dramatic critic who, from old habit, deplored its absence, but the man in the stalls. I can say for myself and for those who have accompanied me to the Play in recent years that say, 'In "The Master Builder" we enjoyed the picture of life in the earlier acts; in "La Doullourence" the smart talk in the garden; even in "The Liars" the same sort of thing, more than we enjoyed the later developments.' For my part, in play or novel, so long as the author merely paints life before me, I am happy; directly he develops a plot or a theory, I begin to dread ulterior designs on my heart or head. Even Stevenson begins to tire me—the more that I cannot escape—so soon as he falls in love with his plot. Take 'St. Ives,' the Prisoners in Edinboro' Castle, the Emigré in his 'nobleman's seat,' Burchell Fenn (?) in his derelict farm, are to me delightful wholly, until they begin to do something. But directly they begin to escape, or tear up wills, or hit people on the head from behind, the weariness of a nightmare in which you run or fight and cannot wake, overtakes me, and I toss, knowing in either case that it is all nonsense. However . . .—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

35 PARK LANE, W.,
13.2.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—Like the old salt who remembered Rodney, in the 'Bab Ballads,' I keep on with contradictory

counsels and criticisms. But, for what it may be worth, here is the latest instalment.

I have read the paper through again. And I revise my judgment on 'Society.' It is better than I thought. But I cannot disguise from myself that the strain of keeping up that page will be terrific. I don't think it can be done, week after week, except by a hack. Nor do I believe it to be worth doing. We appeal to all classes, and some classes will be bored with that page if it does not vary in 'Outlook.' Could anyone for a change 'do' the circle that encourages the Glasgow 'school,' the 'culture' of Edgbaston, the 'tea-fights' at the Universities; the immediate equivalent, if there be one, of the literary, legal, medical and artistic 'ring' at Edinburgh, when Lister, Baxter, Stevenson, Henley and Co. were all there? Surely these should be done?—The remnants of cultured nonconformity; the 'Old Catholics'; the political 'bosses' of the Midlands, with their bath-rooms on every floor and no servants; vintage-wines and worsted lamp-mats; early Millais and Biblical prints. I have seen these things in their environment of Venetian blinds and smoke-smear'd grass; the monkey-puzzle solitary on the lawn 'where no bird sings,' and inside the brand new clock which must be interred in a drawer if you are to sleep.

I believe, subject to your opinion, that my sister's¹ 'Village Notes' would effect a transition. They are obviously written by a 'lady bountiful' (!) and thus might pass muster. They are, on the face of them, by a lady with a 'married sister' in the country. And that is where society is.

Alas! I am quite *hors de combat* this week. I must write my lecture for dear life all to-day and to-morrow.

I must leave by the 11 a.m. Wednesday morning, as I have to open schools at Dover 3 p.m. If worth while, could you breakfast? If not, will write notes in train and post them back from Dover by express delivery.

Congratulate you on leader.—Yours,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

¹ In Appendix C to this volume will be found extracts from the letters to his sister, Mrs. Tennant, that refer to her contributions to the journal.

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*To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt*104 F. MOUNT STREET,
25.2.98.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—My first letter from 104 F. Mount Street must be to you my benefactor. I shall be very happy here. As to business, first I have consulted with Chandos Leigh, Counsel to the Speaker, on the waterwork scheme and Worth Forest. It may be necessary to petition against the Bill, but of this I am not certain until I see Chandos Leigh again.

The people here have received me with the greatest amity and solicitude, thanks no doubt to their regard for you.

I think I told you that I had turned the 'New Review' into a threepenny weekly, 'The Outlook.' The Imperialism may shock you, but not more, I hope, than it does in 'The Outlook's' 'only begetter.' And in other parts of the paper you may trace the impress of much else in the begetter. I told the editor, Percy Hurd, to post the paper to you and shall ask if that has been done. More especially I want you to read 'Village Notes' in No. 3 of Feb. 19, to tell me what you think of them, and to guess who the authoress, Clarissa, may be.

My Mother is very well and has positively taken to riding again! I am delighted. I read a lecture in the Town Hall at Dover last week on 'Elizabethan Adventurers in Elizabethan Literature.' It was a mosaic of the most striking passages in Hakluyt and Purchas, dished up with tags from Shakespeare, Spenser, Daniel and Chapman.

I am enjoying your flat on this bright and frosty morning, as a child enjoys a new toy.

With my love to Anne and Judith.—Your affectionate
cousin,

GEORGE W.

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To his Mother

104 F. MOUNT STREET,
February 25th, 1898.

DARLING MAMMA,—I must just write to say how delighted I am to hear that you are riding again. In the Spring I must come down and ride through the woods with you. We have let '35' for three months and I am here in Wilfrid Blunt's flat.

I breakfasted yesterday at 44 with darling Manenai, looking so well. She is in guffaws of laughter over Clarissa and tells me Papa guessed it.

The House was rather empty yesterday but really interesting. Abyssinia and West Africa. The West African question absorbs me with its interest. You will find the truth of the problem in this and the next 'Outlook.'

Best love to all at Clouds.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To Percy Hurd

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, 19.3.98.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—No. 7 of the 'Outlook' reached me only this afternoon, and I now wish to put solemnly upon record, and quite as much to relieve my own feelings as to give you your due,—that Vol. I., No. 7 of the 'Outlook' is the best piece of periodical literature, *cœteris paribus*, whether of Quarterlies, Monthlies, Weeklies, or Dailies, which I have ever read and re-read with pleasure and surprise. I remember one sensational 'Fortnightly' which, equating a monthly with a weekly, approximated, and, in the heavier line, there were the early numbers of the 'Nineteenth Century.' But these were not surprising. Again, some early 'Scots Observers' were surprising, but not so uniformly pleasing. This No. 7 bangs the lot!

I shall be most interested to see whether it affects circulation. Of the precursors I put No. 3 first, No. 5 second; but this is six times as good as No. 3. By some divine chance our weak point—Reviews—on which I had intended to speak to you, has become a strong point. Well! explosion is pyrotechnic, for correspondence; and these are the mere adjuncts of a brilliant pageant. Cust is chaotic but immense. The leaders are masterpieces of unguessed truth. The whole thing is a feat! Katherine Tynan decorates the table; Pugh supplies the conversation; Henley is ripe over the wine. And last, but not least, Clarissa warms the cockles of my heart. The notes are good, the music is good, the finance is good, the play is good, though a little acid—a pickled walnut. The Personnel is easy and gentlemanlike. In effect, a feat! Who is 'N. M.'? We can't have too much of him.

But now I must cease these plaudits and apply myself to the next number.

I noted your wire, but we had a letter from Mrs. Drew to-day indicating no alarm [as to Mr. Gladstone's illness], just stating, in fact, that her father was coming home as the South was doing him no particular good. It would therefore be a mistake to catch at the newspaper shave, even supposing I could do the trick, which I can't. No.

'Rosebery' must follow, then, if you like, 'Gladstone' as an afterthought.

I have been trying my hand at 'Master W. Silence' to-day, and, if that will do by 10 a.m. to-morrow, I shall go on to 'John Selden.'—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

Wed. 23.3.98.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I shall be with you, I hope, by 5.30, and I hope the journey has not tired you out and that my 'magnetism' may cheer you up as it did last

year. You must not dream of putting yourself out for me. I can go across and sleep at the Coburg whenever you want this 'asile,' more especially to-night. And I will clear out most of my books and papers if they are in your way.

I met Anstey at dinner last night and found that our Animal Rhymes, all begotten by your 'horrid breakfast in the wood,' have made the round of London and are now, after four years, being bandied about as things of infinite jest. It appears that some have been printed in a paper called 'The Man About Town.' When Lord Carlisle and Anstey walking home with me quoted the 'Tiger' in extenso and expressed a burning wish to know the author, I had to own the soft impeachment.—Yours ever affectionately,

GEORGE.

P.S.—You will find an advance copy of my 'Shakespeare' on the table.

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To his Mother

104 F. MOUNT STREET, W.,

April 1st, 1898.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I loved your letter. My cold is pretty well: but it is foggy here and the wind is evil.

I have been looking up your father and grandfather in the Dictionary of National Biography. Your grandfather, Colin Campbell was the second son of John Campbell of the Citadel, deputy-keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland. But who he may have been I cannot discover. Your Grandfather married Mary, daughter of Colonel Guy Johnstone. He was born in 1754. He fought at Martinique and Guadaloupe, was present at Vinegar Hill and defeated the French at Ballynahinch. Took the command at Gibraltar in 1811 and died there in 1814. The value of his strategy in the Peninsular War was criticized at the time by some, but in the end, was so fully vindicated that your father was made a Baronet 22nd May 1815 in recognition of his father's services.

Your father was born in 1786 but, though a boy, was all through the Irish Rebellion with his father—Fought in Canada and the Peninsula, was at Vimieira and Corunna and Vittoria where, the Colonel being wounded, he succeeded to the command of his regiment. I forget the date but he cannot have been much more than 27 years of age. He commanded his regiment at the battle of the Pyrenees and was severely wounded, made brevet Lt. Colonel, gold medal, C.B. and Baronet, as I said, for his father's services. He commanded his regiment at Waterloo.

I wonder who John Campbell of the Citadel and Deputy keeper of the Great Seal can have been ?

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

P.S.—For your Grandfather's services see Napier's 'Peninsular War.' Book x. Chap. v. & Book xv. Chap. v. For your Father's ditto. Book xxi. Chap. v.

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To his Sister, Mary

35 PARK LANE, W.,
5th April 1898.

DARLING CHANG,—Perf can't come on the 10th. He is 'brushing off' with Bendor for a motor jaunt in France. C'est de son âge. But he has just been regretting the clash of two such enticing prospects. And—some day—(that wonderful date that is so long in arriving)—some day I do want—more than any pleasure—to have a real 'riding tour' with you, Cyncie, Perf and suitable companions. We would begin in the New Forest—perhaps see a deer hunt, and, certainly, Christchurch. Second day ride 12 miles to St. Giles and camp ourselves there and at Cranborne. Third day ride 17 miles to Clouds—rest a day or two. 4th riding day to Wilsford and Amesbury, 22 miles—rest. 5th riding day to Savernake, 15 miles—rest and see Forest. 6th riding day to Stanway. What a glorious fortnight it would make in June or September. And what worms we are to get older without doing it.

I gather that Asquith is sitting on his box ready to dash to Biarritz so soon as he hears. That being so, *I* shall *not* return to House of Commons after Stanway. Could we go on to Clouds together? and, perhaps, ride part of the way—if fine?

If you smile at this—or any modification—I will bring Micky as well as Cardinal, and I could also bring Perfection to Clouds. Guy will be there and Cyncie. So we shall want some horses. I am longing for a holiday.

Am very glad my friend Walter Raleigh is to be with us. I have known him for years and, the last time we met, sat up till the thrushes sang. But am now on my best behaviour, of early to bed and early to rise. Besides seeing you, I chiefly want only to feel a horse under me and hear the thrushes and rejoice in April. I wish simply to worship ‘*La regina Avrilliosa*.’—Your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

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To Charles Whibley

104 F. MOUNT STREET, W.,
13th May 1898.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—Your letter has delighted me for you are not only a good friend but a good critic. I am most pleased at your plumping for the ‘*Poëtomachia*,’ and not surprised, since ‘literature’ and Gosse both pronounce it superfluous. I should like to hear what you think of ‘*Troilus and Cressida*’ on re-reading. It is a strange piece of work. Ulysses talks the Divine William at his best and most personal and then, again, there is clowning which can have had no meaning except one of topical guying, now dim, or lost. They do ‘guy’ *twice* in the course of the play and this, unless they took off *known* contemporaries must have bored an Elizabethan audience to death, more particularly since it was done just at the time when the public, teste, Ben Jonson and Dekker and Shakespeare (in *Hamlet*), were being sated with caricature on the stage. It is an hypothesis but in

spite of Gosse it does not 'as yet dislimn':—so *our* Will¹ would phrase it. He is better, thank goodness.

My chieftain 'on the basis of a Barbarian,' viz.: C. J. Rhodes, is in Olympian form. We had a good field-day for him in the House last Friday and were left masters of the situation—a political Atbara with one Sir William Harcourt for Mahmoud. The raid is not only dead, but buried and its ghost laid into the bargain. So, now, full steam ahead to Tanganyika in order to lay up for the next 'scramble.'

If I come over to see 'Cyrano' at Whitsuntide you must make me known to Marcel Schwob, I hope he is better. I hear that you can't away with 'Cyrano,' but I must confess to having read the play with pleasure. I daresay 'It won't do, my dear George, it won't do': yet it has possibilities almost achieved. If the voice in the night had been more akin to the voice of Romeo; if 'Ce sont les cadets de Gascogne' had reflected Villon; if the business with the leaves and the moon in Act v. had out-Wagnered the last Act of 'Tannhäuser'; if 'Cyrano's' dying speech had out-Browning-ed 'Paracelsus,' if Dumas and Molière had been blended to some better purpose, then we should have had a new birth out of many old deaths. As it is I find a suggestion of a poignant 'might have been' and that is much in these days.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

SAUGHTON,
4th June 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I shall be with you on Wednesday and eager for the fray. Not that I have had a holiday. I found stacks of correspondence to wade through, etc., etc., and have been quietly setting my house in order. So that, like Achitophel, I feel disposed to go and 'hang myself.' But the decks are cleared at last, and now for Politics and 'The Outlook.'

¹ W. E. Henley.

I am glad to know that 'Mr. C.¹ Thinks Aloud' found favour so near the rose. I had a letter also from Mrs. Drew after the funeral ² who, returning to 'The Farewell,' ³ wrote: 'No one could have written anything more perfect.' All this must help by degrees and degrees. We have only to hold the Fort.—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE W.

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To Percy Hurd

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
8th June 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—A characteristic story.

Lord Kitchener wished to get back quickly and to hear the debate on the Soudan. He was on the point of embarking at Alexandria, not at that time in quarantine; but driving to the quay, heard that three cases had broken out in the town. The companions said, 'All right, it is not in quarantine.' He said, 'But it will be,' and turned the cab about, travelled to Port Said, and took a steamer to Fiume. Even there some difficulties were made, but finding a menagerie on its way in the same boat as a present from the Mikado to the Emperor of Austria, he represented that they would die if kept back, prevailed, and went on, attended the race at Vienna and arrived on Monday morning in time to hear the debate.—Yours,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

35 PARK LANE, W.,
16 June '98.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—At last I am writing to you. Since Whitsuntide I have lived in the usual June whirlwind. I have been seeing many politicians and dabblers

¹ Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

² The funeral of her father, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

³ An article in 'The Outlook.'

in Colonial and Foreign affairs,—Chief Justice Kotze, expelled from the Transvaal, Financiers who want to build railways in China, lunches to meet the American Ambassador and Chancey Depew, the House and the Opera, etc., etc.

Our dinner to George Leveson was a great success ; we talked for 6 hours and the palm of oratory by common consent went to Mark. He was inimitable. I supped with Charlie Beresford one night after the opera and found myself next a French author, Octave Uzanne ; as no one took the least notice of him I had a pleasant talk over French literature and English manners. He was quite happy, but our general attitude towards him was typical, and especially so in the case of his host. Sibell asked Charlie Beresford ‘ Who is the clever-looking man talking to George ? ’ and got the answer ‘ I don’t know, looks like the Trombone.’

I have discovered a new amusement. Furse the painter lives in Abbey Gardens, opposite the House of Lords and hard by Mark’s house. So I pop across and play a four of lawn tennis with them when business is slack at the House.

I went to a Party at Mary’s after one Opera and found a large menagerie—Arthur Balfour, Forbes-Robertson, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Ed. Gosse and many more. Mary was looking much better and very pretty.

Poor Henley has undergone a severe operation, but successfully. It was performed last Monday week. He passed your poems for press before taking to his bed. But Heinemann is bombarding me to the effect that no books are being bought now and that he is most anxious to hold yours back till September when he would make it the first of his literary autumn output.

I am delighted to hear you are better and hope to see you on the first off day.

All the baser cesspools of politics are being stirred for my delight owing to a post, worth £1500 a year, being vacant in my constituency. The rival candidates besiege my house.

On Tuesday we go to a matinée of Maeterlinck's 'Pelléas et Mélisande,' translated by Mackail.

My love to Anne and Judith.—Ever yours affectionately,
GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles Boyd

35 PARK LANE, W.,
22nd June '98.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—*Do* come to déjeuner, 12.30 Friday, or soon. I read Mackail's translation 3 years ago, and know it nearly by heart. It is effective when read to an audience of 5 or 6, but I have always been curious to gauge its suitability to the stage. I gather that it repugns you! From what others say I am disposed to think that F. Robertson tried to make it a play with modern realistic jealousy, etc., etc. That is absurd. When they gave it in Paris they acted the whole behind a green gauze curtain.

I shall know to-morrow whether the thing can be acted. On the first day, to my great regret, I was absent at Burne Jones' funeral. That was beautiful but very sad to me, for he had been the kindest friend to me since I was 10 years old.—Yours ever,
GEORGE W.

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To Percy Hurd

35 PARK LANE, W.,
2nd July 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I like the story but suggest keeping it for the winter and publishing it as a ghost story. Nobody is afraid of ghosts in July. There are some subtle touches in it. Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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*To Wilfrid Ward*35 PARK LANE, S.W.,
July 24th, 1898.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—

I have read Tyrrell and should like to discuss him with you. He writes with lucidity and persuasion. But there is a third position between his and Sabatier's. A man may accept Sabatier's view that the relation of dogma to religion is best illustrated by the relation of language to thought and may, yet, attach an importance to dogma so great as to justify him in accepting a convinced believer's attitude towards dogma as the only adequate recognition of that importance. Even in literature we decline to bring Shakespeare or Chaucer 'up to date': we prefer, if we can, to read Dante or Homer, however haltingly, in their own Tuscan and Greek. I heard an interesting sermon by Adderley to-day, in which he justified the acceptance of the 'real presence' and the rejection of 'Transubstantiation.' It would have made a good point of departure for a symposium. His point was that the doctrine of transubstantiation was only an explanation of the dogma of the real presence given, necessarily, in the terms of philosophy then current but now obsolete. Adderley would no doubt argue that, in such a case, the relation of dogma to religion may not only be illustrated by the relation of language to thought, but that it actually is more a question of language than of belief. Carrying that backwards to Sabatier's extreme position my supporter of a 'tertium quid' would handle the Incarnation on similar lines. He would say that in the birth of our Lord there was a manifestation of Divinity on earth so momentous and so singular as to find an *adequate* though no doubt an *inaccurate* expression, only in the doctrine of the Incarnation. No other form of thought would give him a sufficiently splendid symbol, he would therefore accept that form of thought whilst

admitting that in thought and, still more of course, in language it partook of human thought and human language belonging to the age in which it was conceived and to the ages during which it was crystallized. But, just because he makes that philosophic concession, he could and would see much gain in keeping to the form both of thought and language and much risk in any ephemeral attempt to re-think and re-write the symbol.—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, 8 August 1898.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—Henley is back at Stanley Lodge, Muswell Hill, London, N. I saw him on Thursday; he is delighted to hear that his preface has pleased you.

The last week of the House was a Pandemonium. I put it in, as support when others are away and the Government is passing Vaccination Bills counts for more than in the prime of the session. My political prospects are brighter and I almost count on 'something turning up.' I confess that I should like to have it so whilst I am still young. A visit to Petworth always confirms my intention to get office. I feel as if I was bound to play a return rubber against the Whigs and, still more strongly, that Sir William Wyndham would not approve of my standing out whilst Jesse Collings adorns the Treasury Bench.

I only went twice to the races and confirmed my conclusion that racing, as at present practised, combines the maximum of vulgarity with the minimum of sport. So Henry¹ and I punted about with Percy and his little Humphrey, on the Pond. We had a great catch from night-lines and trimmers—6 pike and 2 eels. One eel weighed all but 4 lbs. I had no idea that an eel was so lovely a beast, silvery and opalescent and yet marked out for destruction without remorse. In the old library I found some scandalous tracts about La Reine Margot

¹ His uncle, Lord Leconfield.

and Henri III. Also I enjoyed some beautiful Persian paintings unearthed at Cockermouth by Reggy. I should think they are of the xvth century and probably very valuable. There is one of a lady in a pink silk habit, riding a skew-bald horse, over deep green grass towards a sapphire pond with ducks on it. She is nonchalantly turning in her saddle to discharge an arrow over her shoulder at 2 wild geese. Some of the backgrounds—white walls with cypresses over-topping them in symmetrical array—suggest that the Italian who built the Taj-Mahal may have acted also as ‘a capability Brown’—he or another—in the courts of Shiraz and Teheran.

There is much at Petworth which ought to be published, or at least described: Bolingbroke’s letters and the journal of a Col. Percy, for example, who was in the first Virginian expedition. But my uncle will not hear of it.

I found Charles in a capital frame of mind, bent on restoring the political influence of his House. That is better worth doing than wearing a breastplate in the Life Guards.

I enjoyed my day at Newbuildings enormously, also the bicycle ride by Billingshurst and Wisboro’ green.

Sibell sends her love.—Yours affectionately, G. W.

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To Charles Waldstein

35 PARK LANE, W.,
August 17th, 1898.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—A thousand thanks for the warm-hearted thought! It was good of you to think of it. But I would rather that my close personal friends did not move on my behalf. I have approached no one and would rather not, for whatever qualifications I may have must be known to the powers that be. In fact, I am sure that my name will be considered.

I shall not be in the least cast down if I am passed over. On the contrary, the kindness and friendship which has been shown to me by you and many others, will keep me warm for many a day.

I should love the work, and I do not mind saying that I believe I have some qualifications for it which others who have known fewer foreigners and cared less for the literature and ideals of other countries do not possess. But I have plenty of other work if this is not to be my task, and I shall undertake the one or the other immensely heartened by the kindness of my friends and the fairness and good nature of many whom I barely know.

Thanks all the same 'no end.'—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Mrs. Hinkson

SAIGHTON,

CHESTER, August 25th, 1898.

DEAR MADAM,—I do thank you for your book of verses and for the underlying thought which prompted such a gift in -98. I have read the poems and I like them for I find in them what I most seek from poetry, the Spirit of Delight. Your 'Wind in the Trees' is refreshing after a long session at Westminster. I am glad for all our sakes, and for your own, that you can write Spring-songs. We have too many songs of Autumn. It is high time that some singers should turn from the Beauty of decay to the Beauty of birth. We need all the music from the 'Houses of Death *and* Birth.'

Believe me, dear Madam,—Yours faithfully,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

7TH DRAGOON GUARDS,

6TH DIVISION, SOUTHERN ARMY,

2nd September 1898. IWERNE MINSTER.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I am very sorry, but letters and wires rarely reach those who are following the drum.¹

¹ As a yeomanry officer he was attached to a squadron of the 7th Dragoon Guards for the manoeuvres.

I breakfasted at 5 a.m. this morning near Blandford, marched and fought to within four miles of Shaftesbury, retired here, and awaited our baggage till 5 p.m., so neither time nor energy remains.

This work is most interesting, but it is almost impossible to write when out from 5.30 a.m. to 3 or 4 every day, followed by camp work and the struggle to get food. I picked up a snack at Iwerne Minster, but my brother officers have had nothing but a sandwich since 5 a.m., and it is now 7 p.m.—Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
September 19th, 1898.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I send you some more press-cuttings, including reviews of Wilfrid's collected poems edited by Henley and self.

The Press is becoming too farcical. They announced my appointment on Saturday to my amazement on landing at Dover. There is no truth in it! Meanwhile Lord Salisbury continues his cure and I am inundated with congratulations.

Perf's week in France was a huge success. He is a wonderful traveller. We started at 4 a.m. from Tours on Saturday. He slept and ate and kept as fresh as possible. I took him down to Brighton yesterday and return to Touraine with Cuckoo to-night.

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

35 PARK LANE, W.,
19th September '98.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—I hope you are pleased with the reviews of your Poetry. By omitting 'In Vinculis' and

'The Wind and the Whirlwind' we have secured them a vast advertisement, vide 'Literature' and the 'Academy.'

I attended the Manceuvres here attached to a Cavalry Regiment. It was divine to ride for 10 days and camp 10 nights on the Down country, from Blandford to Clouds, Clouds to Stockton, and Stockton to Wilbury. I got up at 5 on the last day and wandered, a ghost, to Wilbury. A most strange sensation, as I have not revisited since before the Soudan. I took Sibell and Percy to Touraine the next day, brought Percy back to school Saturday, and return to Touraine with Cuckoo to-night. The weather has been of Paradise.

Write to me and I will tell you at length of our expeditions. Our address is

Chateau d'Azay-le-Rideau,
Indre-et-Loire,
France.

—Yours affectionately,

GEORGE W.

P.S.—I know nothing of my appointment announced in the papers. My sole hope of its truth depends on the fact that the normal relations between the Press and the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs would thus have been maintained: the Secretary in ignorance of what concerns him most and the Press informing him by the exercise of 'intelligent anticipation.'

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To Percy Hurd

HOTEL BURLINGTON,
DOVER, 4th October 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—Your letter of September 30 just to hand and a thousand thanks for it! In a quaint way this is one of the pleasantest evenings I remember. I expected a load of forbidding worries on landing, 'instead of which' I have indeed some 50 letters, but none of them hostile, and quite 10 from many countries, and even hemispheres (2), each of which is in the nature of

bread returning after many days. 'This is the very poise of happiness.'

But to business. There is one misprint (important) in 'Azay,' viz.: in de Mauny's name. It is 'Mauny-Talvande.'

You have made splendid use of my disjointed notes, and I cannot congratulate you sufficiently on the voyant recuperation of the 'Outlook.'

As you like the Azay, what do you say to 'A Day in a French Chateau'? This would really mean Dampierre, the seat of the Duc de Luyne, right hand man to Le Duc D'Orléans. I should, however, have to disguise all names—a pity, but a necessity. Still, I could give the 'milieu' and the life—a whirl in 'automobile' to the kennel of a pack of staghounds, at a dilapidated castle, with tattered portraits of forgotten seigneurs; breed of the hounds; tame wild boar; 906 heads of stags; old Church where the pack is blessed on St. Hubert's day; details of venerie, costume of sportsmen, real interest of the chase, etc., etc. The chateau by Mansard and the garden by Le Notre, with just the murmur of the Dreyfus hurricane heard far off, as the Revolution was heard 100 years since when the then owners left their castle and infant heir in the hands of the peasants with the unique result that their castle was not pillaged nor their lands alienated, nor their heads chopped off.

If you want the thing, bully me hard for it, as I am working day and night.—Yours, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Father

HOTEL BURLINGTON,
DOVER, October 4th, 1898.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I owe you many letters and have meant, for some days, to sit down and write an account of our delightful three weeks in France. But I find quite fifty letters to answer here and I conclude that, if I do not write now, I never shall. So I postpone a great deal,

including the whole of Azay-le-rideau, until we meet. You must pump me then for Azay. To-night I give you Dampierre.

At any rate you will not wait for my letter as long as the Duchesse de Luynes has waited for our visit. It is seventeen years since Sibell was there with Lilah Ormonde and nearly twelve since I married and promised to present myself to Sibell's French friend.

We arrived from Chartres at the station La Verrière, and were met by brougham with pair of chestnuts and omnibus with coachman in plush breeches and badge of scarlet and silver on his arm. Three-quarters of an hour brought us to Dampierre. It is a perfect example of Louis XIII, a counterpart to the Versailles which Louis XIV enlarged and of which a tiny piece may still be seen embedded in the back and opening on to the 'place de la Carousel.' The Chateau, that is to say, has a high roof of slates and lead whirligigs; string-courses, bands and pediments for the windows, of red-brick, picked out on walls of yellow rough-cast; a deep moat round the whole. But the Chateau itself is but a small part of the real whole, insignificant in material and detail, when compared with Longleat or Wilton. The effect of Dampierre as a type of all French Art, and more specially, in the 'grand siècle' is the 'ensemble.' The Chateau is square with round 'tour à pignons' at the corners and square indenture on the side facing the approach. This makes the innermost court of entry. A bridge with balustrades over the moat leads from it to the 'cour d'honneur' a large paved square or 'place' with a balustrade on the far side flanked by the two wings. These, in the same style as the Chateau are open to the day on the ground-floor, two long galleries in fact resting on arched loggias. One holds the bachelors' rooms; the other the library in their second stories. On each outer side of these wings are subsidiary courts flanked again, in one case, by the stables, in the other by the Museum with, at right angles making the third side to these flanking courts, the 'remises' or coach-houses, and the laundries. Beyond the 'Cour d'honneur' is the

outer court with walls and alleys of cut limes on each side and, facing the house, a high iron grille with wrought gates and two gate houses. So the approach is like this :—[drawing].

But all this in turn, is but the kernel to a general scheme of formal decoration. Prolonging the line of approach, beyond the gate-houses, a vista is cut through a wood on a high hill. On the other side of the Chateau are two vast square gardens, with other moats round each and, as on the approach side, beyond, a vista cut for a mile through high woods. On each side of the vista the woods are traversed by geometrical alleys all cut with the precision of masonry. But, as the trees are sixty to one hundred feet high you can conceive the labour of cutting these vistas. It is done by means of gigantic trestle-ladders. In short you must imagine the vanished grandeur and precision of the grounds about Versailles or Hampton Court in the 16th century to conceive the extent and elaboration of so much water and wood and garden of which the detail only appears when you consider a square mile as one organic whole. That is the secret of French art between 1550 and 1650, and is at the opposite pole from Gothic :—No minuteness, no irregularity, but an enormous scheme of quiet, deliberate intention sprung from one mind and imposed on countless hands. Dampierre, so far as I know, is the sole survivor in present integrity of the kind of thing which rejoiced Cardinal Wolsey or Diane de Poitiers. Inside are innumerable portraits of the family. They hailed from Venice in 1400, where they had been Doges etc. Pitched on Lunyes in the 'midi' moved to Touraine : had been 'Alberti' and became 'D'Albert' the family name. Then, under Louis XIII, their great man blossomed into the Connetable de France. He was to Louis XIII what Buckingham was to our James I. His descendants became the chiefs of the French Noblesse, Ducs de Luynes, Ducs de Chevreuse, and Ducs de Chaulnois ; married the heiress of a branch of the Royal Family and so became reigning Princes of Neuchatel, until Prussia annexed that Principality.

It is curious to see them to-day. Little Honoré—the present Duc, spends his energy in flying between Paris and Twickenham as Lord Chamberlain to ‘Le Roi,’ Le Duc D’Orléans. If ‘Le Roi’ ever comes back he will be the greatest swell in France. But ‘Le Roi’s’ chances are not better than ‘Malbrook’s’ in the old song. So they just sit there and remember the past. There is a veneer of modernity on the ground-floor with modern furniture, billiard rooms, etc., in the London clothes of the men; the chatter of the women, and in the automobile phaeton, but under this thin glaze a deadness of the Dead Sea. All the books are safe under lock and key in the library outside the house. In the house there is no book, no newspaper, no writing-paper and only one pen which I found on the third day of my visit on the only writing table. Judging from its rust and the Calendar which stood at August—97, nobody had written a letter for fourteen months!

The party consisted of Yolande, Sibell’s friend, La Douairière, Honoré, Le Duc, his wife and her sister the Duchesse de Brissac, both daughters of the Duchesse d’Uzés of Boulanger and stag-hunting fame. A Comte de Vogüé—charming, like a cultivated de Léautaud, and his wife with her brother Le Comte Gaïston de Conbade, cousin to Yolande, and le Duc de Brissac the best company of the lot, being a French equivalent for Kipling’s ‘Mulvaney.’ That is to say that, although one of their oldest Ducs with a primeval Chateau in Anjou, he was simply and deliciously a cavalry sergeant straight out of one of Courtelines’ farcical tales. He had been for ten years an officer, ‘bien entendu,’ but he rolls his ‘r’s,’ clips his words, talks slang, and is generally ‘goguenard’ in his remarks in a manner which wins all hearts.

Apart from the great interest of novelty, the life would make one scream from weariness. Nothing happens till 12.30. Go downstairs at 11 or 11.30 and you find yawning servants in their shirt-sleeves ‘frottant’ the waxed parquets. But at 12.30 a complete change. The first of the two great social events—Déjeuner—takes place. All the guests are awaited and we go in arm-and-arm and

sit down every day in the same order and same places by strict precedence with special honour to guests not related to the family. I take in the young Duchesse de Luynes and sit on the Douairière's left; Monseigneur de Vaz (I forgot him) a very good-looking Hungarian Count, now a Priest and Chamberlain to the Pope, takes in the Duchesse de Brissac and sits on her right. To complete the solemnity of this dismal procession, three of the ladies, viz., the two daughters of the Duchesse D'Uzés (de Luynes and de Brissac) also the Comtesse de Vogüé are, all of them, on the very point of becoming mothers. I never saw anything like it even in caricature by Caran D'Ache. Pamela would die if she saw the two sister-Duchesses playing duets side by side. They do this in excruciating reminiscence of the schoolroom. The Duchesse de Brissac is, 'quand même,' very pretty and it is easy to get on with either sister if you talk of nothing but sport. That is the sole topic of conversation. The Grahams of Netherby thirty years since were nothing to this. But they are splendid creatures, utterly unlike the usual conception of French women. They live only to ride and hunt stags and wild-boars. Their mother, the Duchesse d'Uzés, owns the hounds. They hunt two days a week for eight months in the year, and shoot the other four. At Déjeuner, so la Duchesse De Brissac told me, the piqueur enters and deposits on the table, wrapped in a piece of paper, the 'fumet' or droppings of the stag which has been harboured. This proves that he is a warrantable beast and then they hunt him, killing fifty a year besides wild boars. They are very simple and quiet and healthy. The young Duchesse de Luynes refuses even to have a doctor for her confinements—she has already four children—regarding that as a normal and natural event which should keep her out of the saddle during a minimum number of days. Thirty miles from the Paris of Jews and Dreyfussards and anti-Dreyfussards and corrupt deputies and more corrupt journalists, the Osbaldistones are living to-day as though nothing had happened since Walter Scott wrote 'Rob Roy.'

The only incongruity is the 'Automobile' which Honoré drives himself. It is a wonderful machine and goes quite 25 miles an hour along the perfect French roads; peasants, dogs and especially fowls escaping as they can. In it we whirled one morning to see the kennels, some ten miles off at La Celle. I have never seen anything more picturesque. The kennels are in a dilapidated and uninhabited Louis XIII Chateau: the shutters dropping from the windows and great cracks in the walls. Inside are huge panelled rooms with portraits of ancients, Marquis de Palorgeau, hanging in strips and the 906 heads of deer killed since 1873; also heads of wild boars. The hounds were let out into the court. They stand four inches higher than fox-hounds and are a cross between these and the old breed of La Vendée. A tame wild-boar Co-Co caught when young and subjected, as Honoré told me, to a 'petite opération' comes out with the pack. Over the road is the ancient dilapidated church where, on the 3rd of November, a 'Grand'messe' is celebrated in honour of St. Hubert. The music is contributed by the Piqueurs blowing on their horns and the pack is blessed by the Priest. Pamela would love that. And, indeed, the scene on the fenced edge of the forest of Rambouillet is one which I shall never forget.

Now I am sleepy and I must reserve all else for conversation.

Love to all.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Perf has won the Holiday-Task prize on 'Our Colonial Empire.'

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To his Mother

HOTEL BURLINGTON,
DOVER, October 5th, 1898.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your beloved letter has just been put into my hand. So I stop my work of answering fifty business ones to send all my love.

‘The post’ matter, almost as wearisome in length as ‘l’affaire Dreyfus,’ does not really trouble me in the least, I was annoyed for three minutes when the papers announced it as made. But once I had sent a contradiction I dismissed it again from my mind. If I felt I was getting weaker or rustier I should feel in a hurry, but I really feel much stronger than I did two and a half years ago and more agile in my old ‘Tuppenny.’

You must recognize that if I did get a good place for work now it would be better than if I had been given a small place with chief in the Commons three years ago. Very well, then. Assume that I get nothing now, and a simple rule of three sum will warrant the hope that in another three years I shall have lost nothing and may-be gained.

I have written Papa a letter about Dampierre. On the last morning we went in automobile to Manvières, a delicious bright house, to see the old Duchesse de Lesparre. She is the mother of Marie de L’Aigle, the widow of old Bear Sartoris’ nephew, and sister to the Comtesse D’Archiac and Comtesse de Bryas who were, all three (the last then unmarried, Ida de Grammont) so very kind to me in Paris seventeen years ago. You cannot imagine what a dear the Duchesse de Lesparre is, and her daughter and a delightful grand-daughter, a new Ida de Grammont. They were so welcoming, even affectionate, to ‘le jeune anglais’ returned. Had been discussing whether it was Georges Wyndham who played lawn tennis with them at Mde. Truebert’s etc., etc. I had a delightful talk with them about all my old friends and all the ramifications of the Sartoris family, Molly and Dawkins and, since the world is very small, the brother and his wife, daughter of Lord Rosmead who was so kind to me at Cape Town. They and their little boy, at Percy’s school, had been to Compiègne to touch up French. Really the world is small and *immortal* in a quaint way. It brought back my boyhood and ‘A Week in a French Country-house’ and ‘old Bear’ and conversations between you and Aunt Emily and Charlie at Hyères. Quite a breeze from the

past. But the strangest sensation I had come from a contrast and a likeness. All these people—de Lesparre, de L'Aigle, de Grammont—were utterly unlike the Dampierre stag-hunters and, more wonderful, in many tones and gestures they reminded me of *you* and *aunt Mary Carleton* and of your mother. Quite strangely so. You all and they all seem to have kept some faint tradition of affection and fun which I suppose hails from the French circle in which your Grand-mother lived. Anyhow you could not be more unlike the placid stag-hunters with their enormous tummies and complete unconsciousness of humour and books and flowers.

Now I must go back to my dull letters.

Alas! I can't get to Clouds on Saturday. I must see a host of people in London and fit in a peep at Percy as a reward for his winning the Holiday task prize. But I must run down to see you to talk over our tour before I forget it and to hug you.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To Percy Hurd

HOTEL BURLINGTON,
DOVER, 7th October 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—Some of your letters addressed to Azay-le-Rideau have but just reached me.

I am looking forward to our meeting and propose to call at 109 [Fleet Street] at 11.15 a.m. on Monday.

There is a new *spring* and *go* about 'The Outlook.' I 'hae my doots,' however, about the reviewer of 'Buschken.' The start is too analytical and contorted. For such work we need a man who can *add* something of his own knowledge or observation to the subject matter. Instead of 'A great man, said Emerson,' for a start, I should prefer 'When I was at Berlin in '69,' or 'When last I saw Bismarck he was spitting over the side of a ship.'—Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

CHAPTER VIII

OCTOBER 1898 TO NOVEMBER 1900

Under-Secretary of State for War—The South African War.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
October 16, 1898.

MOST BELOVED MAMMA,—I send to you and dear Papa the first and confidential news. I looked through my letters before breakfast in the dining-room and found one with 'S' in the corner. But I did not know the handwriting and I have so steeled myself against hope that I turned it over listlessly and without expectation. But on the lip of the envelope was a Marquis' 'coronet'; so I began to wonder if this was the moment of which I have thought for many years. The conviction that it *was* only grew slowly, for the letter was difficult to read and long in coming to the point. At least, it seemed so and I did not anticipate by looking on at the signature. It is a very nice letter and very amusing and characteristic in view of the circumstances. If you think of the stacks of newspaper cuttings which you have hoarded and the general newspaper fuss, you must be tickled, as I am, by the opening sentence. I will now give the whole letter.

Private.

Oct. 14, -98 (!!!)

MY DEAR MR. WYNDHAM,—You will perhaps have observed in the newspapers that St. John Broderick (sic) has accepted Curzon's place in the Foreign Office. After consultation with Lord Lansdowne and Arthur Balfour, I have little doubt that you would be the person whom

the opinions of competent persons in the House, and of our side generally, would indicate as the fittest to succeed him, if you are disposed to accept the office. I have no doubt that you would fill it in a manner equally advantageous to the War Office and to the Unionist party.

Will you allow me to submit your name to the Queen?—
Yours very truly,

SALISBURY.

No re-election will be necessary.

So then this is 'how it is to be offered a post in the Government.' Of course you will not show the copy to anyone but Papa—to whom this letter is also written—now, or at any time. It belongs to us three for the present and to the archives at Clouds when we are all gone. The event keeps putting into my head an absurd syllabus by Gray, the poet, written as the supposed sketch of a sham book of travels. After indicating many adventures, he writes:—'The traveller is eaten by a wolf: and how it is to be eaten by a wolf.' This, then, I repeat, is 'how it is.'

I gather from another letter, whose author does not wish to be known and who writes in certainty of the event, that it has been a very tight fit and that Arthur himself has not been at all sure of my ultimate success. Anyway 'All 's well that ends well,' and I have plenty of work before me. I have never been given anything since I was given my House-colours at Eton, for I got into the Army and into the House 'on my own.' I like the feel of being *given* something: it is more mediæval than the modern processes of examination or election, and much more pleasing.

So let us sing God save the King
And Lord Salisbury long live he!

—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—My two principal reasons for being delighted at getting office young are:

(1) Because it will please you and Papa.

(2) Because I have set my heart on being a minister of Victoria.

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To Percy Hurd

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, 17th October 1898.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I have received a delightful letter from Henley. He writes of Kipling, and adds :— ‘I’ve edited—very feebly and hurriedly—your note on him. But it needs all the revising you can give it. The tag (?) is nonsense, of course.’—The tag (?) By this he means, I think, the quote from his own verse which he appends : ‘But, as I read, I couldn’t help saying to myself : “By God, he’s right. I am the poet of the Cry ; and Rud’s the poet of the Proof.” I am not *always* modest, am I ?’

Confidential. In case you should at *any* time require the skeleton of my life, as an *editor*. I do not say that you will, but you might. And, if you did, I know that I should receive a distracted wire when busy, or not receive it, being absent. So here goes :—

‘G. W. was born on the 29th August 1863. The eldest son of the Hon. Percy Wyndham, brother to Lord Leconfield, and a daughter of Major-Gen. Sir Guy Campbell, Bart. Her father came of a line of soldiers ; indeed, he saw service first at the early age of *fourteen* (verify in ‘Dic. of Nat. Biog.’) at the side of his father during the Irish Rebellion, and after being severely wounded in the Peninsular War, received the Baronetcy declined to his father for services in the same campaign. On her mother’s side she is the granddaughter of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the rebel leader, who died in prison of his wounds, and of Pamela his mysterious bride. Mr. G. W.’s father, like his son, began life in the Coldstream Guards, and sailed with that regiment for the Crimean War, but, being invalided, he turned to politics and sat during 25 years as member for West Cumberland, in which county he was also chairman of Quarter Sessions. Mr. G. W. was educated first by the Rev. C. G. Chittenden, who, oddly

enough, had in earlier days also instructed Mr. A. J. Balfour ; and then at Eton ; he passed through Sandhurst and joined the Coldstream Guards in March 1883. He served through the Suakim Campaign of 1885, and acted as adjutant to his battalion during its detention at Cyprus and the voyage home. In Feb. 1887 he married the widow of Earl Grosvenor, sister to the Earl of Scarbrough, and was appointed unpaid private secretary to the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P., then Secretary for Scotland. When Mr. Balfour succeeded Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Wyndham had to choose between two careers. He elected to leave the Army and follow his new chief. During the coercion days, he wrote a number of letters to the newspapers upon the controversial topics of the moment, and wrote some articles for the 'Contemporary Review' on the Irish Land Act in opposition to Mr. Michael Davitt and Archbishop Walsh. In 1887, he was accepted as the Conservative candidate for Battersea, but, on the sudden death of Major Dixon, member for Dover, was elected unopposed for that Borough on July 12, 1889. He continued to act as unpaid parliamentary secretary to Mr. Balfour until the Conservative Party lost office in 1892. During the three years of Opposition he concerned himself in the House chiefly with Imperial and Colonial questions ; whilst outside politics he wrote for the 'National Observer,' edited by Mr. W. E. Henley, and when Mr. Henley took up the editorship of the 'New Review,' contributed to that magazine. He also wrote for 'Cosmopolis' ; in both cases principally on old French Poets, Villon, Charles d'Orléans, and, more especially, Ronsard. In 1895 he edited a reprint of North's 'Plutarch' with a lengthy introduction, and this year he published an edition of Shakespeare's poems, again with a critical introduction and voluminous notes.

'His interest in Colonial affairs led to his nomination as a member of the British South Africa Committee, and, in the Autumn of 1896, he made an extended tour to the Cape, Johannesburg and Bulawayo, at that time 500 miles beyond the railroad. He had so far kept up his

connection with things military as to serve in the Cheshire Yeomanry from 1888 to the present time. In that capacity he was attached to a Cavalry Regiment during the recent manœuvres.'

Now I don't say that you will ever require this information ; but, if you ever do, there it is. Should an occasion for using it arise in the mere course of your editorial duties, I must beg, as a personal favour, that in the ' Outlook ' you will not add a word of praise, but that you will merely chronicle ; and I hope that, in chronicling, you will only select such items from the information I have given, as may seem to you to be of general interest.—
Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Mrs. Drew

October 22nd, 1898.

I like your condolence better than most congratulations. It is more flattering. But, as you say, the die is cast : the shilling is taken, and so I must say farewell to liberty and Letters.

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To Charles Whibley

DUNRAVEN CASTLE, BRIDGEND,
GLAMORGAN, 30th October 1898.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—A thousand thanks for your letter, it is written by a real and warm-hearted friend. I have my work cut out for me at the W. O. and your French friends are adding to it. Let me hear from you if the war-spirit begins to boil up in Paris.

I can only thank you, again and again, for making me feel that I have real friends to back me in a stiff job.—
Yours affectionately, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Charles Waldstein

DUNRAVEN CASTLE,
October 31st, 1898.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I must answer just one line of warmest thanks, because you are one of the few of whom I thought when the news came : true friends and old friends whose kindness and confidence in me has helped in the past as their encouragement helps me now. I have plenty of work before me (and a good week behind). I go back to-morrow or next day, and thenceforward shall not leave the W. O. between now and Christmas. So that whilst I am more bound down in one way, I am freer in others and nearer to Cambridge. Be prepared, therefore, for me to realise the project of old standing and to run down, dine and sleep at 'King's.' I should like to keep touch with the young and, as you are the youngest in England and a leader of youth, you shall and must help me.

I won't say more now except that I prize your letter.—
Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 28th, 1898.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I dreamt of you and thought of you so much last night. Write to me soon telling me how you are.

The 'Morning Post' takes me to its bosom for my speech at Oxford on Saturday. That is because the editor happened to be there as a member of the United Club. The reports are poor, of course, but the speech, apparently, was just what they wanted at Oxford.

We had a delightful Sunday afterwards. Walked to Cowley to hear the best 'Plain Song.' It is very beautiful and very like 13th century architecture. We lunched

with an undergraduate friend of Bendor's, Maryon Wilson in 'Garlick's lodgings' to meet Harold Baker, who is by way of winning the 'Ireland.' Dear Hugh Wyndham was there. We went on to 'All Souls' and 'did' it with Fellows and Students. Had tea with Hugh who was very affectionate and charming. Visited Baker's rooms lined with the classics. Went to chapel at 'New' and so to bed.

All love to you darling.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 29th, 1898.

BELoved MAMMA,—I send you back Sir Clement Markham's letter. I am very glad that *he* liked my article as he is the best authority on the subject and recently wrote a book on the doubtful voyages of the younger Cabot.

I can hardly believe that they will make me a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society for such a small work. If they do I shall be delighted. Sibell lives in the hope that I may some day be given an honorary degree at Oxford!

I enjoyed talking to the undergraduates on Saturday very much as I wish never to lose touch with the young. One only learns to use what one has in one as one grows older. It is there all the time and fresher at the start than later.

I want to see you soon, darling.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

Christmas Eve, 1898.

MOST DARLING BELoved,—All love to you for Christmas and to all at Clouds. I have sent you a little heart-leaf

box. I bought it from Tregaski, of the Caxton Head, High Holborn, who assures me that he bought it himself in Italy. He is respectable for a dealer and I feel fairly sure that it is an old one. Anyhow it is nice. When you have tired your dear eyes at the furnace [enamelling] it would rest them if you did some of this work as well :—Gesso on thin wooden boxes. A Mr. G. T. Robinson wrote the chapter on Gesso in W. Morris' 'Arts and Crafts Essays' 1893. But he does not explain it very clearly. I am sure that you could do it beautifully. In the Middle Ages they used it on helmets and shields for tournaments.

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From
your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

SAIGHTON,

December 30th, 1898.

MOST DARLING,—Yes, 'Curran' is here. I will look him out and post him to you to-morrow. I only gradually discovered the *number* of the presents you sent me. The scissors are delightful and most useful and the Berceuses are precious. Did you know nothing of their being reproduced?

We have had a perfect short gallop to-day. Just in from it glowing to my finger-tips. The music of the hounds, screaming like silver-bells, made my blood sing. Five minutes very fast and then fifteen more to ground, *racing*.

Love to all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Ward

SAIGHTON,

January 15th, 1899.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—

I am glad to know of your article. It is just what I

want. After a day spent in grappling with complicated detail I find that nothing short of philosophy or poetry is of the least use to me. I tried a novel the other day—‘The Open Question’—and it aggravated me beyond belief. I want the very best and prefer it in a difficult form and remotely aloof from everyday life. I have bought a Latin Prayer Book—our prayer-book, 2nd edition 1574—and find the Psalms very stately and soothing. A little Latin goes a long way. But when your business consists in ploughing like a liner, through seas of ship-shod English, you need the very opposite:—a dead language, clean-cut and frigid poetry, or abstract thought.

None the less do I look forward to your wife’s novel. For that will be like conversation with a friend and the religious theme behind the work of art will interest me.

I have been inside a good many machines; the Army, Irish Office, Colonial Expansion, Fleet Street, Literary coteries, and now, inside and of another office: and no doubt such experience affects one. The multiplicity of parts defying philosophic comprehension and the dead weight of each dragging down individual energy, drive home the lesson that no individual or race, or age, or movement embracing many nations and some centuries, is likely to give a decisive cast to the direction of development or even to reconcile any considerable number of divergent forces. But this does not daunt me. I see the universal Flux; but I believe in the choric Dance.

In some ways business is a capital exercise or drill. It gives you a number of occasions every day for doing the right thing in the right way. This is capital practice. But, far from thinking that mere honest effort at complicated jobs would serve mankind as a substitute for Philosophy, Religion and Art, I do not believe that the second Class Clerks could work as they do if we had not all the abstract speculations of three thousand years behind us. We either draw inspiration ourselves or else we imitate others who drew it, from the half-truths arrived at by lonely thinkers.

But, my Goodness, how much more of courage and compassion and patience and sincerity is needed if the world is to go any better than it has done !

And what is to be done for the people who are outside the worlds of thought and action ? For the young lady—a guest—who lost her temper here last week because she was not invited to dine at Eaton, or for the officer who resigns his commission when his profession interferes with his shooting ?—Yours ever, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To Percy Hurd

35 PARK LANE, W.,
7th February 1899.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—In view of the many claims on my time, I thought it wiser to put in another general essay instead of sketch from the life. The benefit will be in certainty and punctuality ; the loss may be mitigated by a few vivid notes. Also we shall thus avoid repetition—not easy—if you have notes, a political leader and the ‘ Personnel.’

You must remember that you are to cut or reject my stuff without a qualm. But I almost hope this is the right stuff. I will explain its genesis. It occurred to me that the best way of advertising the paper would be to cram an article with names, so that the owner of each might unfold and smile at his ‘ Romeike.’ That being admitted, I selected for subject ‘ The Young Men of Promise ’ in the House. I analysed Dodd last night, taking everyone under fifty, alphabetically, of course, under four heads : the young men of promise, (1) who ‘ plugged away ’ ; (2) who didn’t plug, (a) because they were ill, (b) because they were idle ; and (3) and (4) the young men in office. Then I wrote my screed in the train, ballasting it with ripe reflections on courage, on some private conversations of Mr. C. I copied it to-night and found, as usual, that it was miles too long, 1400 instead of 1200. But I have cut it down, and, honestly, I don’t think it will bear much

more cutting. It is 4 or 5 lines too long, but try to squeeze it in.

I do congratulate you most warmly on your success.

For next week, I threw out 'Highgate Woods.' See letter in 'Times.' They must be saved for the London that is to be. This suggests a glance at 'Terrification'—not hostile to Lord Salisbury—for they mean well. But the B. P. [British Public] must be made to see that, having become Imperial, it is for them to emulate Augustus, and finding London brick, to leave it marble. The Conservative set-off is, that the wealth of London, not being municipal but, largely, Imperial, it would not be fair to equalise rates in order to light and pave Bethnal Green on a scale impossible in Glasgow or Manchester. No! The Imperial city must be fair and with groves around it. But Cobbet's 'Wen' must not suck more than its share from the sustenance of the whole body politic.

How right we were about Uganda! See leader in the 'Times.'—Yours very sincerely, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
February 8th, 1899.

DARLING MAMMA,—Dear old Guy does go to India. But they have all got him well into their heads at the War Office and I feel sure that his chance will come.

Sir C. Grove volunteered to me the other day that his reports were very good. They know what a fine character he has and that counts for much. Sir C. Grove quoted from memory a phrase which I thought very good:—'great personal charm without any weakness of character.' He said, 'but it is very rare, you know, a man like that can get others to follow him.'

All love to you.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

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*To Percy Hurd*SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, 24th April 1899.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—I go to-day for a change of air to Halkyn Castle, Holywell, N. Wales. I pin my hopes on the move, as I am not getting on very fast here—cannot shake off a throat or pick up much strength.

The Review, 'A Matter of Form,' was excellent; so was the 'jape' over Omar the Tent-maker.

I can give a good note re Henderson and West Africa, if you will look up the report in yesterday's 'Times.'
Capt.

The details of Lieut. ? Henderson's adventure are still more striking than could be guessed even from the romantic narrative in the 'Times' of Feb. 11 (?) When he went alone into the camp of Somary's followers at (?) he was at first treated as a prisoner, and his captors discussed before and with him the manner in which he was to be put to instant death. After a little of this he said that as he was very sleepy, he could not attend to the argument and would sleep until they had made up their minds. This he proceeded to do, and the unexpected performance saved his life for the first time. This calm indifference persuaded Somary's men that they had to do with someone of immense importance. So, loth to take the responsibility of his death on themselves, they sent him to Somary's court at (?). And here he saved his life, for the second time, by a like exhibition of courage.

He found Somary on a throne surrounded by four thousand warriors. But, when motioned to do homage on his hands and knees, he did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he sat himself right down on the throne beside Somary, at the same time shaking that monarch warmly by the hand. Thanks to this, and to nothing else, he was accepted for the representative of a great sovereign instead of for a captive doomed to die. He talked to

Somary of the Queen, and Somary talked of himself. Thus a mission which might have ended, as so many African missions have ended, in silence and the suspicion of unspeakable horrors, did, in fact, end in a valuable basis for future relations between the United Kingdom and a Mohammedan Power. That is the way in which Empires may be built, under Elizabeth, or under Victoria.

—Yours,

GEORGE W.

P.S.—The leader is capital.

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To his Mother

HALKYN,
*1st May 1899.

DARLING MAMMA,—*(more shame to it! what a first of May!) I am really well now and hope to go to London Wednesday and begin 'light work'—as the servants say—on Thursday.

I should love Clouds with you and Margaret¹ but I should not sleep o'nights for thinking of all the work that I am *not* doing. I shan't be myself till I get back to work. Perhaps I will come to you for Sunday. I should love the peace of it and to be read to by Margaret. Give her my love. This is a beautiful place—not the house—with a beauty of the North, a wizardry about it. Steep up behind the house after a sharp rise is a tumbled upland of derelict mines, old Roman mines and middle-age mines and modern mines all grown over with short grass and wind-clipped gorse close to the ground. Behind it Welsh mountains, quite close when a wet wing waters the air, like card-board mountains behind the switchback. In front a grove of enchanted beech-trees, 60 feet high and about 20 feet apart, with high silver boles but all their tops combed back and clipped by the wind which comes off the upland as a bread-knife off the table. In front of them a blaze of high-gorse in blossom in a hollow, safe from the wind, by a tarn. Through their boles—as

¹ Mrs. Mackail.

through the Botticelli Ravenna pines—you see the estuary of the Dee, and beyond the spout of Cheshire, just as on a map when it used to relieve the tedium of English counties in the school-room. And beyond the estuary of the Mersey, and beyond Lancashire smouldering and glittering in cloud-shadows and sun-bursts. ‘And all was the old Duke’s country.’ And out to the left I pretend to see the Isle of Man. My dear! the ‘Sands of Dee’ are wonderful. A film of water fills them over with high tide, and filters out by winding channels. And the water and the sands never reflect the same here in the same place for more than a moment, they change like an eel.

Daddy¹ is shocked to hear that I admire this view of the estuary and the spout and the smoke and the little boats and the many changes. He has sent me a message to say that the switch-back mountains are the proper view.

Post going.—Ever most loving son, .

GEORGE.

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To his Sister, Pamela

ST. GILES,

SALISBURY, May 25th, 1899.

DARLING PAMELA,—This is a lovely place, or rather province, as beautiful and wide and dowered with memories as the other provinces about Wilbury, Clouds, Stockton, which we have known and loved and which make up a kingdom of Romance, if not of History. I suppose it was a Kingdom when our forbears met at the moot—moot, meet?? by Downton and when their kings were crowned at Winchester or Sarum. It is, in short, part of the country of downs and juniper bushes, belts of fir and beech, of solitary yews where hamlets have died out, of chalk-rivers and grey churches, of Roman roads turfed over, straight as the rod of Hermes about which the modern white road winds. The expanse and liberty of it are such that you can *live* in it and not be imprisoned in it

¹ The Duke of Westminster.

as in other parts of England. From the top of the garden I can see the clump of Win-green which we see from the drawing-room window at Clouds. But it is sixteen miles as the crow flies to that window. And between, you can see Cranbourne Chace like a wood-land on a map.

We have been very happy here since Saturday. Sibell, Cuckoo, Lettice, Madeline's friend Lady Magheramorne, Tony and I.

There is a belt, as at Wilbury, about eight miles in circuit and all beyond is virgin down. I ride with Tony every morn before breakfast and again with him and Cuckoo in the afternoon.

In the church is a lovely and gorgeous monument of the founder of his family or, rather, according to the inscription, of the restorer of its ancient fortunes :—*hanc antiquam familiam delapsam in pristinum splendorem restituit*. He, a Cooper, was one of my admired Elizabethans ; was, in fact, at the siege of Cadiz with Essex and Raleigh. But among his titles to fame was the introduction of the cabbage into this Island. There he lies with his wife in painted stone under a canopy glowing with marble and colour, in armour with an enormous cabbage planted beyond his toes. He left an heiress who kneels, a dear little lady in a dark gown, on the steps of the monument, quite outside the canopy and saying her prayers to the altar. In the dusk she looks like a living worshipper and, the parson tells me, often made him jump when he first came to the place. The first Ashley married her. In their monuments you may read what to me is the distracting history of the 17th and the cheerless history of the 18th century. The first big Ashley, grandson of the Cabbage, fought on both sides in the civil war and wound up as Lord Chancellor and a member of the Cabal. Then comes the philosopher and friend of Voltaire whose writings gave the base for Pope's 'Essay on Man.' His tomb and his sons' tombs are purely pagan with three Fates instead of saints and martyrs, and the church rebuilt in those disheartening days is as cold as ice. The inside has now been restored by Bodley by frankly putting

a 13th century Gothic church inside the Georgian shell. That may be very wrong—probably it is so—but it tells of the yearning backwards over the death and distraction of the odious XVIIIth, perplexing XVIIth and rotten-ripe XVIth century to the form and colour of the Middle Ages.

Certainly we have lived in a most interesting time of transition. It is strange to see all the different movements, Oxford, Pre-raphaelite, Socialistic beginning to weave themselves into a cable to tow civilization back to its moorings from which the great floods of the Renaissance and Reformation wrenched it to the sound of many waters. Will the cable break? . . . That is the supreme question for those who care for politics and art and letters and who love their land. If it does, as is too probable, we must to sea once more and run before the storm praying to find again the stout hearts of our people's fathers. But I long more and more that it may not break and that you and I may live to see the beginning of a new Age settled and orderly, rich with recovered treasure from the past and wise with the experience of three hundred years' strife.

Anyway it is good to be alive and strong and to gallop over downs.

Tony has a kind heart and the most good-natured face, so I hope Cussie¹ will be happy with him.

Love to Eddy and your dear children.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

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To Percy Hurd

CLOUDS,

SALISBURY, 19th August 1899.

MY DEAR MR. HURD,—It is ages since I wrote to you. But, as you may guess, I have been pressed by work.

How is the 'Outlook'? Getting in your funds and circulation? In every other respect it is going steadily ahead. It has gained a distinct place in Parliamentary estimation and among most of the people whom I meet.

When I get back to W. O. work after September and

¹ Lord and Lady Shaftesbury.

have my evenings free, I shall hope to renew our dinners at the 'Cock.' Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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Private.

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
September 11th, 1899.

MOST BELOVED MAMMA,—I have a piece of news for you which is *really good* news—I think *very good* news. I am almost sure that Guy has been selected for staff-work in Natal. Lord Wolseley sent me a note to say so but that he would not get his orders for two or three days and, just now, a clerk from A. G.'s department has come in to ask me his address. Is he at Umballa now? or have they gone anywhere on leave? I advised them to cable to Umballa. Well I know you will really be glad as it is a great chance and *everything* to be selected even if the South African Republic gives in.

I gather that he will be sent to manage lines of communication, which will play an important part in any development, whether of occupation or of actual war. But, Lord Wolseley says, once there the O. C. Natal may use him for any service.

Wire me if you *know* that he has gone anywhere for his leave.

And now as to Minnie. My advice would be that she should wait two or three weeks in India on the chance of things fizzling out altogether. Then, if they do not fizzle out, I should advise her to come home and we will take care of her. For if this thing goes on, it will be a long affair.

I think I can explain the situation roughly.

Natal is the shape of a diamond, the apex of which tapers up between the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The tip of the apex is on Laing's neck near Majuba. And all the top triangle is exposed on both flanks. Ladysmith is where our troops are now, five battalions Infantry, two

regiments Cavalry and three batteries Artillery. We are *adding* six battalions Infantry, three regiments Cavalry and six batteries Artillery.

Until they get there that top triangle is exposed.

The line of the railway runs from Durban through Ladysmith to the Frontier at the tip.

If Guy does go he will go *at once* to Durban and work at the communications for getting the reinforcements up to Ladysmith.

If Kruger gives in, well and good. But if not, we shall send more men. So that whatever happens, once there Guy will probably have to stay three months at least. Under those circumstances it seems to me that Minnie had best come here. If, however, it becomes *clear* that Kruger means to give in during the next four weeks, then, I suppose, he would go back to India. That is why I recommend her waiting three weeks or so for any news.

If she insists on going to South Africa she *must* go to Cape Town and not to Durban. It is only two or three days between the two places. At Cape Town Sir A. Milner and Lady E. Cecil and Benny would look after her. But Durban will be a hell upon earth whilst disembarkation etc., goes on.

So soon as I *know* that he has been sent orders I shall send him a long wire. I will wire you again to-morrow. If he is ordered we must write to *Durban* as he will start in a few days to be at Durban before the troops arrive.

This is only for you and Papa. I thought you would like to know all about it.

Have just seen Lord Wolseley, he tells me he should have selected Guy in *any case* on his Staff college reports.

And now all love to you darling.

I don't believe there will be war and however inconvenient to Guy and Minnie the turn out may be, the fact that he is selected and has a chance of meeting and serving under the lot of soldiering generals will make the whole difference to his career.

Best love to Papa.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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*Urgent.**To his Father*

WAR OFFICE,
September 13th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—Guy has been selected Deputy Assistant Adjutant General in Natal. But we *can't* get his address.

What we want is some clue from his last letter as to whither he intended to go for his leave.

This selection is a tremendous chance for him.

We are sending 10,000 troops to Natal and Sir George White, who knows him and speaks highly of him, goes out on Saturday to command in Natal.

In all probability there will be no war. But there will be a prolonged occupation and Guy may rise to higher things. Anyhow he gets his chance of promotion and certainty of Staff employment.

Where is he? Commander-in-Chief India wires back that he is not with his regiment and address unknown.

I spent a sleepless night worrying over this *contre-temps*.

Every day is of importance as he must get to Natal before Sir George White.

I cannot make it out. He has muddled off somewhere with Minnie, Madge and the Governess and left no address.
—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
September 13th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I am relieved about Guy. Sibell wires that he and Minnie are on their way back to Umballa. I put her on to Mrs. Howard who had a letter from Minnie by last mail.

Have just seen Wolseley again who says he will be in

time by the first troop-ship from India which gives him five or six days. Wolseley, most complimentary, repeats that he has not selected him in any way to oblige me but solely on his Staff College merits.

You must not believe the papers as to chance of war. I am almost certain that the Transvaal will give in. Meanwhile Guy will be on the Staff with a force comprising as many guns and more cavalry than we had at the Alma. I shall now ask Sir George White to give him plenty to do. I will send you maps of Natal.

I enclose Wolseley's note which I received at Saighton last Monday for Mamma's collection.

Love to all, am hard at work.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
September 14th, 1899.

MOST DARLING,—I have not seen your letter which, I hear, is at Park Lane. Sibell will bring it me at Charing Cross for Dover to-night.

I cabled Minnie £4 16s.'s worth of affection and advice on Monday last : advice in these words, ' await events and return England if crisis continues.'

I feel as sure as anyone can that there will be no war. But there will be an occupation of the Transvaal-Natal border by an army, with lines of communication via Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg to Durban.

The Staff from here is ideal, all my best friends and friends to Guy. Sir George White commands and takes with him, my dear Colonel Hamilton with whom I stayed at Bulford and Harry Rawlinson, my friend, who was also there.

Now I must write to Minnie.

I hope and believe that Guy is found. He has gone off camping with Minnie so they will have had a nice time together. He was due at Simla September 27th, so must

soon be on way back anyhow and we may trust the C. in C. India to find him and convey our order.

Once on the selected 'list' he is all right.—Your devoted son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

HOTEL BURLINGTON,
DOVER, September 17th, 1899.

DARLING MAMMA,—In case you overlooked it I send 'Times' with Guy's name in it. I wonder where he is now and whether he is very pleased. What most rejoices me for him is the composition of the staff—White, Hamilton and Rawlinson—an ideal trio. It is strange to think that I dined and rode about with Hamilton and Rawlinson at Bulford only the other day and that they have now left Ushant behind them and are forging ahead for Madeira.

The particular move which we have effected is No. 3 of possible alternatives which we had worked out when I came first to Clouds and to which the finishing touches were put on that first Monday on which I ran up to London. We have kept well ahead with our work but it has meant for us at the War Office many days and long hours of high pressure. I don't think we could have tried harder; so I am philosophically prepared for hitches and unjust blame. But for all my philosophical airs and graces I am not really an 'ancient Roman,' and would give, goodness knows what, to have twenty minutes' talk with Guy and to show him the ropes and say with live voice 'Go in and win.' I work at politics and letters and dabble here in science, but I remain a barbarian *caring* more for my own people than for the Universe.

I saw Flying Fox win the Leger on Wednesday week and managed to put in Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at War Office, caught train to Dover and assisted at Sir Michael Foster's opening address to British Association. Back to War Office by

8.30 a.m. Thursday and returned for a 'Conversazione' here in the Town Hall. Opened the Victoria Hall for Soldiers at 12 noon Friday with a speech that moved audience because Guy's 'Odyssey' was the prime motor of my thought and language. On to a full-dress lunch at Barracks and on to opening a laundry with a Bishop. In the evening an enchanting address from M. Richet in French. A most loveable man and the *best* speaker I have heard. He is a close friend of Sir M. Foster and has been persecuted for two years for sticking up for Dreyfus.

That is why I have thrown myself into making the visit of these French savants a success. No one *hates* the Dreyfus atrocity more than I do, but this newspaper mobbing of a whole nation including such brilliant and loveable men as Richet shocks me too. After the lecture we resolved into a smoking concert and I was shot for another speech. Saturday we received 400 French savants in the 'Maison Dieu' Hall. Mayor and Corporation in robes with chains and mace and burgh-mote horn. Foster, Lister and other great guns spoke and I made a little speech in French which the Frogs applauded to the echo. We then had a lecture by J. J. Thompson which, if his theory holds, will revolutionize our idea of the Universe. Then a lunch of 1000 in a marquee. I made another short speech, first half in English and latter in French, which again enchanted the Frogs.

A great, gross, rollicking Buffoon of a French journalist near me was delighted. He roared out 'Il est malin celui-là, comme il arraye ses mots! Un, deux, trois, quatre, et puis Piff!' pointing his fore-finger to indicate a bull's eye. We then went in a tug on board the 'Niobe,' one of two First Class Cruisers which Goschen had sent at my instance. We find in the Captain, Winslow, a delightful cousin of Eddy's with two photographs of Pamela on his table and 2nd in command, Rosy Wemyss—so small is the world.

To-day I went to church and took a long walk over the downs, putting up three partridges and a corn-crake, to the S. Fore-land lighthouse. There I find Oliver Lodge

and five or six scientific swells of the first order. We went in and sent messages by wireless telegraphy, first to a place thirty-two miles off in France and then to the light-ship on our own Goodwin Sands. I walked home with Oliver Lodge and had most interesting talk on the borderland of the physical and psychological Universe.

I am off to-morrow by 8.30 to War Office to take up threads of South Africa, and back for Tuesday and Wednesday here. Then, undiluted South Africa. And 'Such'—as they say—'is life.' I am very well and, to complete happiness only await a letter from Guy. Your devoted son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
September 22nd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—It now seems almost certain that our troops will be kept in South Africa till February or March. I have written this to Guy by this mail. His best address is :—

Capt. G. Wyndham,
16th Lancers.
D.A.A.G.
Durban.
Natal.

And I have written it to Minnie. I now feel very sure that her best plan is to come *home*. She will be nearer to Guy by post from here than from India when once all the transports have sailed from India. And he is bound to get leave home after the occupation. Then, too, her children will occupy her thoughts. Could you not ask her to Clouds for the time of waiting? If so I should cable soon. I will do it for you if you like. She could then cable to Guy telling him to write to her at Clouds. I will make all this clear to them both in cable if you and Papa approve.

I am finding out what things would be useful to him

in the way of clothes and medicines and will send him off a box. Who is his tailor? He ought to have *woollen* Khaki instead of the Indian cotton drill. We are sending it for the troops. I shall send him some new flannel shirts and drawers and trousers. The two pairs which Papa sent me in -85 were the joy of my life.

Tell Papa that for military *information* I recommend the '*Army and Navy Gazette*' and the '*Morning Post*'! For *talk* the '*Broad Arrow*'!

I have written Guy not to stint himself in cables to Minnie or self.

I am finding out his ship but imagine he sailed yesterday in the '*City of London*' with General Sir A. Hunter, Chief of the Staff. If so he will arrive a good ten days before Sir George White. There will now be a weary wait unless the Boers force the running.

I long to see you. I go to Saughton to-morrow and return Tuesday. Our work here is all done for the moment and we can only await developments.

Best love to you, darling, and to Papa and all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—Have just seen cable '*Hunter, Murray, Wyndham*' sailed 21st in hired Transport.'

Hunter is Sir Archibald Hunter, Chief of the Staff. Three transports sailed but, as it says Brigade Staff was in '*City of London*' that I take it is the vessel now bearing Gumps [Guy] and his fortunes.

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To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

September 24th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Here are two letters from Guy and from Minnie. They show that he was longing for the chance and that she was not taken by surprise. It is amusing her '*bottling*' because of you. Just as if I didn't feel it at the back of your eyes all the time I was at Clouds!

I still think that the chances are against war, though in favour of a longish occupation. Every day on which the Boers do *not* cross the border confirms my view. For *now* is their time and opportunity.

Darling Chang came in and saw me at breakfast yesterday, she looked better than for years past. The pinched look gone out of her face and in great spirits. I send this off now as you will like Guy's letter soon.—
Ever most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
September 27th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I will and, indeed, am seeing to Guy's clothes. But I can't get the serge for some days.

My friend, Colonel Hamilton, wrote to me from Madeira saying he would look out for Guy. So Guy will not want for friends among the powers that be.

We are hard at work here ; learning a great deal every day as new problems arise. It is not all beer and skittles to send troops six thousand miles over sea with all their transport and supplies.

I will come to Clouds perhaps on Saturday fortnight.

Lansdowne's boy, Kerry, has sailed for Gibraltar, and will go on if we have to send the larger force.

Love to all.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Brother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
St. Michael & All Angels, 1899.

DEAREST OLD GUY,—‘*Jacta est alea.*’ The Cabinet decided to go ‘full steam ahead’ with our Army Corps. I am glad our course is clear, and consumed with curiosity to see how the old machine will work. I shall get well

dusted when the House meets, for we shall present the cost in the form of estimates. This will enable my friends to 'rag' me over every item.

I am going to dine and sleep Sunday to Monday with Buller who sails to-morrow week.

I hope to get a letter from you soon. Just off to dine with Winston Churchill who goes out as correspondent of the 'Morning Post.'

No time for more. Best luck to you.—Your loving brother,
GEORGE.

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To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
 October 2nd, 1899.

DEAREST PAPA,—Have just seen a cable from here suggesting Guy as Brigade Major of Cavalry Brigade, Natal, to be commanded by Brocklehurst. This, if it comes off, will be in my opinion the *best* staff post.—Your loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—Have been to Aldershot, dined and slept with Buller and rode all round the camp from 9 to 12.30 this morning. Very interesting. Mamma might write a friendly line to Lady Audrey who was most kind. Buller most kind to me.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
 October 6th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I can't come to-morrow as I must go to Sibell. But I promise for Saturday week and will try to bring her.

Dear Guy has got what I consider the 'plum' of the whole expedition. I had no notion of it till I saw his name in a cable some days ago, and to-day I saw it in the

official printed list of the Staff for Natal. In Natal there will be in a few days, or hours, four cavalry regiments. There would be five—two there and three from India—but we are sending the 9th Lancers on to Cape Town, but of the four remaining a Cavalry Brigade will be selected of three regiments, and Guy is to be the Brigade Major.

Colonel Brocklehurst, late of the Blues, will command. He is a great friend of mine and, I think, next to Ned Talbot or equal with him, the most perfect gentleman in the British Army, the kindest and nicest and most chivalrous. He takes Lord Crichton as A.D.C., and he too is one of the best we have; Lady Erne's eldest son.

They will make a grand group of three being all about 6 foot 2 high and beautifully matched. Harry Crichton, oddly enough, has always reminded me of Guy. They might almost be taken for each other.

Well, darling, we are giving our best for this Empire; and that is quite right and what we wish to do.

Between you and me and the gate-post we mobilize on Monday. I trust all will go well. I know we have worked hard here for success. And I believe the Army is more efficient than at any time since Waterloo.

Cuckoo and Tony came to Park Lane on Wednesday, so I have had their company in the evenings and at breakfast. Very nice and cheering after a rather sombre spell of dinners at the Travellers and Marlborough.

Best love to Papa and Ditchmouse and all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 9th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I had a nice note from Brocklehurst on Saturday saying he does not know Guy but 'hears on all sides that he is very fortunate to have got him as Brigade-Major.' He adds, 'We shall be a cheery party.'

The Press has taken our Mobilization very well. The leading article in 'Morning Post' is fair and intelligent.

I long to see you and am coming on Saturday.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 10th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Herewith a delightful letter from Guy. Please copy and let me have original: also Brock's note for your collection. I have wired Minnie advice to come England *soon*. She would thus arrive here before anything definite happens—if anything definite is ever to happen. She is nearer Guy in England than in India, there being no through shipping-line, but the chance of a steamer at Zanzibar.

She will also be *as near* as at Cape Town. For if Guy, which Heaven forbid, were invalided at, say, Glencoe he would go down to Station hospital at Durban, and by hospital ship to Base hospital at Simon's Town near Cape Town. This in easy stages would take a fortnight or three weeks. It would be quite impossible for anyone to *meet* him against the stream of transport of sick. So I want you all to understand that in England you are in closest possible telegraphic, postal and physical touch with anyone in the Field Force. People don't think out these 'Time and Distance' problems. Best love to you all darlings.—Ever your most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—Thank Papa for Minnie's letter. She is a first-class wife for a soldier.

P.S. 2.—You may not understand Guy's references to telegrams.

1. I wired unofficially Monday afternoon Sept. 11th.
2. He received this at Kasauli Tuesday 12th after breakfast.
3. Went to Umballa 12th and began to pack on spec.

4. Returned Kasauli Thursday 13th and found his orders had come overnight.
5. Left Sunday, 17th.
6. Embarked Thursday 21st on Sutlej.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 11th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Well it has come and we are in ‘a state of war.’ Don’t pay the slightest attention to alarmist rumours. We are all well ahead with our work. Of course one thinks gravely of the situation but there is always something to laugh at on these occasions and a laugh is good for the liver. Between you and me I could not help being amused at a demonstration by Timmie Paulet.

I was dragged out of my room to see dear Lily and Timmie’s wife in a great and not unnatural pucker at having received a code cable from Timmie who is at Bulawayo to this effect. ‘War imminent. Mafeking will be attacked to-night and *probably destroyed* (!!). No need to be anxious.’ At the time I was very sympathetic and explained that Timmie was five hundred miles away with two organized forces of ours between him and the border. But since, I have been laughing a good deal at old Timmins firing off such a torpedo! They tell us they are quite serene about Mafeking.

Remember that the wires will be cut and news edited, so believe nothing.

We have plenty of troops where dear Guy is now and, Buller informs me, can over-look the Boers if they advance for twenty-five miles. So we will not only hope, but cheerfully believe, that all will go well. Best love to Papa and Ditchmouse. Tell Papa I did refer to the leading article in the ‘Morning Post,’ which was fair to the War Office, not to Wilkinson’s belated lucubrations.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
October 13th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We come by the 3 p.m. from Waterloo after seeing off Sir Redvers at 2.12.

Our officers are all to wear the 'Sam-Brown belts' and these have leather scabbards.

Disregard all sensational news. We are satisfied, though of course annoyed about our train. It was not a train going down with women, but one going up under Nesbitt. He tried to rush it through some Boers, I believe, and it was blown up, fifteen killed.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
October 21st, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—How I long to know exactly where you are. The news of poor Symons' fight kept coming in as I was speaking in the House. The last cable, saying he was mortally wounded was read out by Balfour. The whole house uncovered their heads and stopped debating. A most impressive and touching scene. We had been going for each other hammer and tongs, but with news of Symons, of heavy losses and no casualty return we—all, the Irish too, to their credit—buried our war of words and went home at 11.30 after voting £10,000,000 for the war.

Dearest old Guy may you be safe and well and *do* wire more often. I lodged £20 for you in the Standard Bank, Durban, to be used in wires. What I want is to know where you are, then I can guess what you are at.

Best love to you, old boy.—Your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
October 23rd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Guy is safe so far. We have in all the lists of Friday and Saturday. I read out a summary to the House which was *purposely* put at the lowest. We do not want to mislead people into thinking our troubles are over. But you must not mind hearing that we have gone from Dundee to Glencoe. Strategy is a science. You must go to the *right* place even if, by so doing, it may seem for the moment that you are retiring.

So let us pray and believe and be quietly cheerful in the thought that all these Englishmen are heroes.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 24th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—We have not much news but what there is is good. General Yule, who seems a very ‘confidential’ person, has effected a smart flank march south to join Sir George White. He avoided the enemy. White went north to meet and protect him and fought a ‘successful action.’ We have no further details of the fight but, as he mentions no losses, we imagine it was a small affair. They are we believe together to-night. And that lifts a load of anxiety off my mind. White now has seven batteries, four cavalry regiments and plenty of infantry. So the risk of engagements against largely superior forces is, I hope and believe, avoided. He will also get a battalion of Rifle Brigade to-day or to-morrow and some drafts.

Best love to you Darling and to Ditchmouse and Bun.
—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 26th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Bless you for your letter. Well, well . . . to-day is vastly pleasanter than yesterday. I thought I was tired yesterday, but as I feel as fresh as paint to-day, I conclude that I was, without knowing it, only anxious.

Yule's force is now really in Ladysmith, very tired but all well and in good spirits.

It was a bore having to go to Dover without the casualty list. I arranged to have wires sent to you and Minnie in my name before starting and to have 'good news' wired to the meeting and 'bad news' to my Hotel. It wouldn't have helped anyone to have bad news with a large audience on one's hands. But the good news came, just before I spoke—Guy safe and the concentration effected—Phew! . . . as Carlisle puts it at the end of a paragraph.

I had slept all the way to Ashford—believing I was tired—instead of preparing a speech. But when I got the news I didn't feel a bit tired and whanged in well to a gorgeous audience who hung on every word.

I came back by the 8.30 to-day and found this priceless communication from that darling old Hunker, Guy. Isn't it like him? To leave us perspiring for five days of fighting and marching, and then in reply to my wire 'where are you?' to reply 'Ladysmith.' Bless him!!!
—Ever most loving son, GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
Oct. 27th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I loved your two letters. I hope that we have now got a breathing space and,

which is more important, I know that our soldiers are having a rest. White wired to-day that he meant to concentrate all his strength and rest the men. Of course if the Boers come on he will have to fight them. But we hope they are tired too and their horses. Anyway our men ought to be more rested than they by the time they do come on.

I send you a slight attention from our friends the 'Frogs' addressed to 'Sir Wyndham' in the approved 'Frog' fashion.

I have wired to Minnie each time and, as the accounts may get muddled by the time they reach India, I put 'Third Battle, Guy safe.' You need not bother about the squadron. They are all right at Pretoria, poor fellows.

I think I shall use this respite to pay my visit to Cuckoo. Much as I should love to come to you.

White says he has now an 'admirable force in excellent spirits.' Darling old Guy is with lots of friends now all snug together.

I missed Papa to-day. Sibell lunched with me at Willis's. I got his wire too late to do more than send a note to Travellers Club asking him to come and join us.

I am much relieved at the House being up and am now working away at the embodiment of the Militia.

Now rest and be at peace inside for some days. The Boers behaved quite well on entering Dundee, molesting no one, and the wounded there, except poor Symons, are all doing well.

Love to all.—Ever your devoted and most loving son,
GEORGE.

P.S.—I enclose a letter from Lady Graham.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
October 27th, 1899.

MOST BELOVED MAMMA,—You must not be fretted by the newspapers. All our dear soldiers are now snug

together in Ladysmith. They have blown up the bridge over the Sunday river on the Dundee-Beith-Washbank River-Ladysmith road, by which Yule marched. The Boers themselves blew up the bridge over Washbank River on the railway from Glencoe to Ladysmith. So I do not believe they can get their guns up for some time. Either they will concentrate and come on together—that means a long respite and lull—or they will leave the Free State force near Ladysmith alone.

If they do that White ought to smash it with superior force. He has quite fourteen thousand men now in Ladysmith, and forty-two guns and three and two-thirds Cavalry regiments. So don't have any more 'tightness' of the heart till I tell you.

I am *much* more at my ease over the situation to-night than at any time these last five weeks. White sent us a capital cable to-day. He doesn't mean to play any 'high-jinks' and will keep all his men together. Meanwhile we have thirty-thousand men or more on the sea, so there you are!

The most striking thing done yet to the imagination is that we practically switched Europe off Africa for three days during Yule's march. We shut down every telegraph office from Cape Town to Aden. I was well roasted in the Press for this. But now they are rather ashamed of themselves in the light of our successful concentration.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

347

To his Brother

35 PARK LANE,
October 27th, 1899.

DEAREST OLD GUY,—What a regular old 'hunker' you are not to have wired me where you were until I screwed it out of you. I could not guess whether you were at Durban, Maritzburg, Ladysmith or Dundee. I am thinking of you all to-night, snug in Ladysmith, and exchanging the news with Yule's lot.

I could not help being anxious during Yule's march. We practically switched Europe off Africa from Sunday to Tuesday. As a result people here thought there had been a disaster and that we were hiding it. So they roasted me well in the Press. Now they are ashamed of themselves.

Here I am writing to you about your news which you will have forgotten by the time this reaches you in the light of later excitements, instead of telling you about home.

I got the 'men and money' very easily out of the faithful Commons and slipped off to Southampton Saturday to see the Coldstream embark, so far our mobilization and embarkation has gone off without a hitch. Arnold Foster has gone to bed, or to Bath; has not, at any rate, turned up in the House and is, no doubt 'biding' for the first bungle.

Late Saturday night I got to Clouds and cheered up Mamma. She is very brave and philosophical, but, of course, you make us perspire a good deal. On Wednesday I had to speak at Dover and Sir George White's wire of casualties at Driefontein and junction with Yule did not come in before I started. I have rarely felt so uncomfortable as in the train on the way down, now it's all right you will think me an ass. But to us, here, a retirement of fifty-eight miles before a superior force, which was also a flank march, and the mere fact of which we had to 'bottle' from scores of questioners, was a beastly thing to contemplate.

I do not like the position at Ladysmith on the contour map very much and wish that we had made our camp at Colenso.

However, dear old boy, I have all confidence in White and Hunter and French and the whole lot of you.

The Cabinet have been good about supplies since they began to move at all.

I rammed it in for all I was worth to make a job of it at home, so we have leave to embody 33 Militia battalions—one for each regiment of which all battalions are abroad

—to replace all mobilization stores and clothing ; to raise seven cavalry regiments to higher establishment and 15 F.A. and 4 R.H.A. from four to six-gun cadres. That is not bad, is it ? When first I rammed in Beach asked me ‘ what for ? ’ I said, ‘ the defence of the country.’ He said, ‘ Fiddlesticks.’ All the same we are to have the lot.

This will seem very remote and small to you. But it was most essential to show Europe that we could fix up South Africa and remain ‘ as good as new.’

I suppose White will try to smash the O.F.S. column from the West before the S.A.R. column from the North comes up. But I earnestly hope he will not try this unless he has a safe margin of time. Still we have unlimited confidence in you all. All our money is on you and we don’t want to hedge.

The ‘ Frogs ’ have been inimitable after their wont. Every day they announce a combination of France, Russia and Germany to crush the ‘ perfides.’ One anonymous Frog, again with due regard to ‘ Frog ’ traditions, has posted me a coloured print ‘ les premiers prisonniers Anglais ’ of English officers being marched into Pretoria, the envelope was duly super-scribed to

‘ Sir Wyndham
War Office,
London.’

in this little way I owe it to ‘ Frogs ’ to rank with Sir Pitt and others of the great departed.

Give my warm congratulations and kind regards to Sir George White and every possible greeting to Ian Hamilton and Harry Rawlinson. How I long to be with you all ! Wire me after battles like a good fellow, won’t you ? It helps Mamma. Also wire me if there is anything that the War Office can do for the force. Our cousin Willie Wyndham, Hugh’s son, has chucked his Aide-de-Camp-ship in Ceylon to join his regiment. Look out for him if he comes your way. Bless you and all good luck.
—Your loving brother,

GEORGE.

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To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
October 28th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—The two remaining squadrons of 5th D. G.s have landed at Durban, the first on the 22nd, the second and last on the 25th.

The battalion of Rifle Brigade disembarked at Durban to-day.

In addition a battalion of the Border Regiment which was at De Aar in Cape Colony is to-day in the train to East London where a transport will await to convey it to Durban ; it should be there in three days at latest.

This shows that we are not anxious about Cape Colony.

Yule's Column is *in* Ladysmith, tired but happy.

Best love to darling Manenai and Charlie.

We are all happier to-day. The last two days have been anxious ones and I am glad they are over.—Your loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Father

ST. GILES' HOUSE,
SALISBURY, October 29th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I send you back your letter in order that you may understand my corrections. You have, not unnaturally, confused the 19th with the 9th. The Cavalry Regiments originally in Natal were the 5th Lancers and 18th Hussars. We sent from India the 19th, 5th D.G.s and 9th Lancers. At first there was an idea of switching the 19th off to Cape Town. But, as the stress was greatest in Natal, they were allowed to land and have been there a fortnight. We have not heard of them before because, no doubt, they were given a rest in which to get their horses on their legs. The 5th D. G.s landed one squadron also nearly a fortnight ago. The 2nd and

3rd squadrons detained by two cases of anthrax, arrived last week. The 9th were switched off to Cape Town. And it was they, not the 19th, who lost 90 horses and had to put back to Durban and start again for the Cape.

The upshot is that White has now at Ladysmith the 5th Lancers, two squadrons 18th Hussars (one captured) who were always in Natal. Also the 19th now rested and on their legs and the 5th D.G.s, two squadrons of which have only landed recently. Guy we know is at Ladysmith. Another thing has been cleared up. Bethune, in his regiment, who was sent from India on the idea that the three Indian Cavalry Regiments would act as a Brigade is commandant at Durban. Therefore Guy must necessarily be the staff officer for the complicated and broken Brigade at Ladysmith, i.e. the 5th intact, and two squadrons of 18th, and 19th intact and now fit, and the 5th D. G.s, not perhaps fit as yet for prolonged work.

Contrary to my expectations it is possible that an action was fought to-day. Tell darling Mamma this, White meant yesterday to go for a hill four miles north-east of him on the Helpmakaar Road. The enemy may have fought, or may have retired, I shall not know in all probability until to-morrow afternoon.

In any case White has now fourteen thousand men with him and the brunt ought to fall on the infantry. So you need not be more anxious than you can help. And the position is far better than it has been any time these last four weeks.

White is right in going for any single column. If he sat still the result would be that Ladysmith would be invested and cut off for some time. This would mean a long wait without news. Every time he pushes back and upsets a separate column he retards their plans and gives time for our reinforcements to arrive.

Best love to darling Mamma.—Ever your most loving
son, GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
October 31st, 1899.

MY MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I have put off writing in the expectation of more news and details. But no doubt our men are busy in Ladysmith and have little time to sit down and indite despatches.

Humanly speaking dear old Guy is safe. We know that he was *not* with the detached column that went wrong. Adye was the only staff officer with that force.

Now we have nothing to do but be quite serene. First so as to pursue our avocations, wherever they may be, to the best of our power, and secondly, because nothing could worry our dear fellows out there more than to know, if they could, that we were worrying at home. They would like us all to be happy, so we must be happy.

White is no worse off than before, as the Rifle Brigade and Border regiment make up for the two lost battalions. He has provisions for 90 days and plenty of ammunition. It would be unfair to criticise him or anyone else. We will all pull together until we are through.

I see that the Cavalry is highly praised in to-day's 'Times.' Bless you, most darling Mamma, and keep happy to please darling Guy.

We are sending out three more battalions and a Mountain battery to fill up the holes.—Your most loving son,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 1st, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—You will read Sir George White's account of the disaster. It explains the inexplicable. I guessed what had happened, but not until 8.20

last night. Then, driving in a cab to dinner, I suddenly remembered the two boxes of ammunition, like large cigar-boxes, which are hung panier-wise on the mules. I had puzzled all day with the back of my head whilst working with the front on other matters. But it flashed on me then. The mules had bolted in the night with the ammunition. That we now know to have been the case.

It is very sad ; very tragic ; but there is nothing in it to rankle or that one would wish to forget ; on the contrary, they all did their best under most trying circumstances.

White behaved like a great gentleman in taking the whole blame. And no more need be said.

For the rest he is no worse than he was, as the two battalions in outweigh the nine-and-a-half companies lost.

It was like Hedworth Lambton to turn up with big guns. He must have unshipped and railed them up on his own responsibility.

We shall have five battalions in at Cape Town in eight days, nine in nine days, fifteen in a fortnight, and twenty-one in three weeks.

So we have only got to sit tight and look happy,

‘ If your officer’s dead and the sergeants look white,
Remember it’s ruin to run from a fight,
So take open order, lie down, and sit tight,
And wait for supports like a soldier.’

They are safe enough in Ladysmith under God’s providence.

We are all so busy and all have so many in the thick of it that it is easy to be serene and even cheerful in the sense of brotherhood right through the nation.

And when it’s all over we’ll thank the Mothers ! I shall come to you for Sunday.

Best love to Papa and Ditchmouse.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 2nd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Things seem fairly serene. The wire to Ladysmith is *not* cut. We have just had a short one in to say that Egerton of the 'Powerful' has been wounded in the leg by a shell. This seems to show that not much beyond 'long bowls' between the big guns is going on.

It is hot and muggy here to-day.

Pamela dined with us last night and I lunched with her to-day. She is very well and happy. I saw her children.

I shall try to catch the 11 o'clock train on Saturday, but more likely it will be the 3 p.m. Love to Papa and Ditchmouse.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

353

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 3rd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am coming by the 3 p.m. to-morrow and, I hope, Sibell comes too.

Dear Guy is safe by latest wires. I believe that Ladysmith is safe. Anyhow we have many of our best men there, plenty of food and ammunition. They are no worse off than the Mafeking and Kimberley people have been. For the odds are about the same though, at Ladysmith, on a bigger scale.

We shall not hear much now for some time. But our re-inforcements will begin to arrive within the week and the Boers must be at least as tired and probably worse fed than our own.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

354

*To his Brother*WAR OFFICE,
November 3rd, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I know what a tight place you are all in. But you are a good team and I hope and believe you will pull through.

I am afraid that you will not get my earlier letters for some time. The wire is cut to-day, and, I suppose, they will cut the railway behind you also.

It has been trying for us to wait so long for the casualty lists. Monday's fight only came in to-day, Friday.

Everybody here has taken the loss of the two battalions very well. There has not been a murmur or a vestige of excitement. But, of course, everyone is deeply moved. I long to be with you. Give my love to Hedworth Lambton and to all my friends.

I devoutly hope that you will be re-inforced a fortnight before you get this.

I wired Minnie to-day that you were safe, and children well and that she was to 'cheer up.' I shall wire her to each port at which her steamer touches. Your darling children are very well. I go to Clouds for Sunday and they make experiments with my shaving-soap, brushes and so forth. We are *all* well at home.

How I wish I could be in Ladysmith with something to do! We shall go on here preparing to hit as hard and as fast as we can until we establish an overwhelming superiority. But you are a long way off and it takes time to get the blows planted.

God bless you, dear old boy. I think of you all the time.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

355

*To his Mother*WAR OFFICE,
November 4th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—All love to you and to darling Manenai and to dear Charlie. I am so sorry. They have

paid their toll to our country as truly as any one of the dear fellows who have suffered in Natal. And Charlie's letter is so brave and quiet. Tell him I appreciate it.

And now as to news. The wire was cut 2.30 on Thursday between Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith. We had a wire sent that morn by Hedworth Lambton, showing all well. And press-wires published to-day but sent Wednesday prove that the garrison of Ladysmith was confident and cheerful. They have several companies of Engineers and many of our cleverest Staff-officers to direct, and 10,000 strong pairs of arms to execute any entrenchments that may be necessary. So you need not mind the Boer guns. All that happens is that you put your field guns in very deep trenches ready to come out if there is an attack. But look at Mafeking! They have not been able to hurt us there. Why should they be able to hurt us at Ladysmith? The position is precisely the same only on a larger scale.

I don't want to prophesy but I believe we shall relieve them long before they are really pressed.

So let us all cheer up and do what we can by being cheerful to help. That is all we can do. We can't all be in Ladysmith though we would all like to be there.—
Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

Fondest love to Manenai.

356

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 6th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—My best love to darling Manenai and to Charlie. They are very brave and good.

I have a letter from Ian Hamilton, to October 10th, from Pietermaritzburg. He writes, 'I have seen your brother and he is very fit and certainly in the highest spirits.'

We have no official news from Ladysmith since the

'pigeon'-despatch. But I believe we shall go directly to relieve Ladysmith and I believe our troops there can hold their own until relieved.

Sibell and I will come to Babraham next Saturday—Monday if Charlie would like to have us.

Minnie—I know by her wire to me—sailed on the 4th from Bombay. So we shall soon have her back.

All love to you darling and to darling Manenai.—Ever
your most loving son,
GEORGE.

357

To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
November 6th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We have no further news since the 'pigeon'-despatch which you will have read. No news, that is, from the front.

Buller seems to be 'all there.' I believe that we shall go in for the direct relief of Ladysmith via Durban.

I enclose a letter from Ian Hamilton about Guy and the situation.

The rumours are that our successes on Thursday and Friday were considerable. Love to all.—Your most
loving son,
GEORGE.

358

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 7th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I sent you a wire based on a telegram which you will read in to-morrow's papers. The Cavalry fought, Thursday and Friday, two successful actions about Ladysmith. Our losses not heavy and Guy safe as two officers' names are given. Since then there has been a cessation of fighting. They feel confident of holding Ladysmith and the bombardment is doing very

little harm. The tide ought to turn in our favour within the next three weeks. Every day enables them to make the camp at Ladysmith safer. Meanwhile dear old Guy is in capital company with Big Brock ¹ and Harry Crichton.

Our work goes on smoothly and, so far, without a hitch. Privately I may tell you that we shall send out more troops and seek to establish overwhelming superiority at the earliest date.

But I shan't holloa till we are out of the wood. All the same you may be much happier in your mind. Go by our wires and disregard the press.

Don't be disappointed at the transports not arriving so soon as the papers expected. I don't expect them before Friday or Thursday at earliest. But once the first gets there we shall be pouring in men at from four thousand to five thousand a day.

Best love to darling Manenai and to Charlie.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

359

To his Brother

35 PARK LANE,
November 10th, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—It is difficult to write when one knows that communication is interrupted. But of course, the letters which will be stopped are those I wrote weeks ago, and this one ought to reach you easily if we relieve you as I firmly believe we shall.

You can have no idea of how mystified we are. White has probably sent pigeons which have been shot, or Kaffirs who have gone on the booze, anyway we know very little of what you have been doing.

And, to complete the comedy, a pigeon comes in yesterday saying that *you* are anxious for news! To us you seem a monastery of trappists. We know nothing. One pigeon told us that on Thursday 2nd November you had shelled a laager and that you were out on Friday 3rd.

¹ General Brocklehurst.

Another Kaffir bearing a censored wire of the 'Telegraph' that you had a 'smart action' on Friday 3rd. That is all that we know officially or semi-officially; but by rumour we are led to believe that Brock and the Cavalry have been doing 'terrible things.' We hope so and are sure you have done well. But we know next to nothing.

We are only thinking of relieving you and hope to do it in three weeks. What a horrid time you must be having under the bombardment. But no matter. You have saved Natal, and the nation will be for ever your debtor. All well here.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

360

To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
November 11th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—You will see our news in the papers. We got it in these stages. A 'censored' telegram sent from Ladysmith yesterday, Monday, 6th. That means, I take it, a correspondent's telegram approved by our military censor. It was taken by a Kaffir to Maritzburg. It means too another successful cavalry fight on Friday. No more fighting till Monday. Bombardment doing no harm. Garrison confident of holding the place.

No time for more.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

361

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
Saturday, November 18th, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I have just got your letter of the 21st October. What a lot of work. You had a good initiation into the sheer, dead grind of war. I hope you are not over-tired and that you are still quite well. I

doubt if you will be relieved for ten days or a fortnight at earliest. I wish the Governor of Natal had not influenced our Commanders. We all think here—by that I mean Arthur Balfour, and the inner ring—that it would have been far better to clear back to Colenso from the start. But we quite understand that poor Symons in the first instance and White who found the other disposition made, may have judged it impossible to recede against political advice. Now we have to wait longer and, naturally, many are anxious. But I plank my bottom dollar on you all and believe you have been keeping the enemy fairly well engaged round Ladysmith.

The work here is heavy and the long waits unconscionable.

We shall go on mobilizing and sending off any troops Buller asks for until he has achieved marked superiority over the enemy. Our 5th division ought to start about the 28th. We shall also send large drafts to the four divisions and Cavalry regiments already out.

Ned Talbot went out and is with Buller. Stephen Frewen is going next Wednesday to pick up mules in New York and do remount work.

Dearest Minnie arrives London to-morrow, Sunday. I shall send brougham to meet her and she will go to '44' and on to Clouds. I have secured her cabins and compartments from Paris, and she will be met by our agents and officials at every stage. I am so glad to think she will be back with all of us and your dear children who are very well.

Lansdowne is away to-day so I am in charge. Milner sends rather gloomy news of possible traitors in New Cape Colony, but now our men are pouring in their ardour ought to cool.

Take care of yourself and make the most of any chance of rest you can get. Thank Ian Hamilton for his letter in case I have no time to write.

God bless you !—Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

362

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 18th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Enclosed from Reuter quoting White may be trusted. Our wire this morning reported all well to 13th.

On second thoughts I kept Guy's letter and enclosed it to Minnie. Ian Hamilton on 26th October writes that Guy is in 'great form.' He had all the work to do for ten days and did it well.

I do not feel as if I ought to throw over Stanway, so keep Minnie at 44 till Tuesday afternoon and give me lunch there.

Things are really *much* brighter. Our three batteries are at Maritzburg by now and quite 12,000 to relieve. So we shan't have to wait very much longer.

My best love to Manenai and to Charlie, tell him his book ought to get an A1 show. Dunn of 'Morning Post' wrote to me about it and I have prompted the whole Press.

I was shot for another speech, unreported, on Thursday at Goldsmiths' dinner, so was tired yesterday, but all right to-day. I am here as Lord Lansdowne is away. All the more reason for taking Sunday and Monday off. Mind you keep Minnie for lunch Tuesday.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

363

To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
November 18th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—All well Ladysmith officially to 13th. The wire in evening papers is a Reuter which quotes White so it may be trusted. Also the cable in the 'Outlook' is from Goldmann who married Miss Peel.

I have a magnificent letter from Guy of October 21st, which I have kept for Minnie. He did wonders in the way of work, single-handed, as Staff Officer for ten days. Only two nights in bed out of ten and marching twenty-five miles a day. I knew they could not have a better man. Our three batteries ought to reach Maritzburg to-day, and we have 12,000 infantry by now to relieve. We only want cavalry to begin, and I hope Buller will send on Airlie and 12th Lancers.

I enclose a good letter from Ian Hamilton after Elands Laagte.

Love to Ditchmouse.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

364

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 22nd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—There is no news but all is well.

I send Guy's letter and Ian Hamilton's for the archives.

Best love to Minnie and all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

365

To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
November 23rd, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—We have no news beyond details of the numbers of troops arriving and their distribution. But to the best of our belief all is going on smoothly and expeditiously.

Our people on the spot considered the alternatives of staying at Estcourt or retiring and decided for the former. They have a good position, artillery including long-range Naval guns and an adequate force to act on the defensive. We knew of the Boers' advance southwards some three

or four days before it was reported in the press and the pressure on Ladysmith must have been relieved.

Now, as to my plans. I am coming to you Saturday to Monday to see Minnie. After that I will try to get two and will insist upon getting one day's shoot.

I don't ask you to do it but if you could shoot the pheasants first on Tuesday I should have a better chance of getting two partridge days Wednesday and Thursday. If you shoot partridges Tuesday I should have to go up to London Monday morning and return in the evening which would be difficult and might end in my only coming Wednesday evening for Thursday's partridges.

Love to all.—Your loving son, GEORGE.

366

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
November 24th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I enclose Methuen's second despatch, A. It looks as good a 'victory' as we can expect under the circumstances, and the moral effect will help Milner against disloyal Dutch in the Colony.

By 'under the circumstances' I mean, given that on 'moral effect' grounds it was necessary to relieve Kimberley and clear our Northern border. It was right to do this. But you cannot do that and *also* have the benefit of waiting three weeks more to get up your six cavalry regiments. Methuen had the 9th Lancers with him to the best of our belief, but, as they had no casualties, he may have sent them elsewhere and yet thought well to surprise the position at Belmont.

B. shows that Clery is quite serene about Natal. I hope we shall not force the pace there, but wait for a chance of obliterating one of their commands. At Ladysmith, Estcourt, Mooi River and Northampton Road we are strong enough for any attack they can bring to bear.

I am glad the Guards had their chance.

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

367

*To Charles Boyd**Confidential.*WAR OFFICE,
28.11.99.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—The dinner must be next week.

As to Army Reform, the editors are on a wrong track.

One after-dinner sentence of Lord W. in an impromptu speech has been made the text of wild talk.

Sir John Ardagh is a 'scientific' soldier if ever there was one, and, until the contrary is proved, I believe in his detailed list of the Boer guns. Nothing so far has occurred to make me doubt it.

What the Army wants is 2 more Cavalry regiments, Lancers.

It may be well to have some Mounted Infantry regiments as separate corps instead of, as now, companies drawn from line battalions.

But all this turns on recruiting. You cannot increase the Cav. and Artillery to approved limits without recruits. You cannot increase the number of horses, because the grind of grooming them without sufficient recruits is the chief cause which reacts against recruiting.

Mere pay will do nothing.

368

*To his Mother*WAR OFFICE,
December 1st, 1899.

DARLING,—I love writing to you, it is a nice little 'easy.' But I have no news. Buller is evidently maturing some deep schemes which ought to come off soon.

I am so sorry that I did not see Papa to say Good-bye.
—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

Maxie is going to South Africa, so I have written to Tiny.

369

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
December 1st, 1899.

MY DEAR OLD GUY,—Bendor writes from Cape Town that French praised you highly as Brigade Major. The correspondent of the 'Daily Chronicle' after touching on the retirement of the right column—60th and Leicester—says it was the theme of universal admiration. Your admirable letter shows that they owed a great deal to you and I hope that your chiefs know it.

It has been weary work here waiting for the relief of Ladysmith. But we hope now to hear of it in a week or eight days. Buller has plenty of troops and, as he has told us nothing for three days we like to think that he is making a plan—as the Dutch say—that will let you out and 'let them in.'

Barring Elands Laagte we have not had one complete victory. Methuen and my friends with him seem to have been banging at them magnificently. But they have not defeated them, or out-witted them yet.

Your letter was a splendid one—I mean your letter to Minnie with the description of that bestial day. I had guessed that the right column had been hammered as well as the left: otherwise, White would have pushed home his attack since it was his last chance of avoiding what has followed.

Give many messages from me to 'The Doctor'¹ and Johnny Willoughby, also to Brocklehurst and Harry Crichton.

I have seen a great deal of dear Minnie. She is looking very well and is much more happy now that I tell her good news to keep up her 'pecker.' Mamma is anxious, but I manage to convince her too that things are not as bad as she thinks them.

Your children are in triumphant form. George gives

¹ Dr. Jameson.

dramatic entertainments in the drawing-room. He acts 'Puss-in-boots.' Dick is told off to be the King and the Ogre. Mamma to be the 'reapers,' Dorothy to the 'mowers.' George tells them that they must be very frightened when he threatens to cut them up into mince meat. He then, with difficulty, gets into a large pair of boots and slings a bag round his neck. By this time Dick has moved off. Nothing daunted, George pursues and brings him back, puts him into a chair and says, 'Now remember, Dick, you are the King.' Having made these dispositions, he looks round, and proclaims in a loud voice, 'One, two, three, the game will begin.' He then gets under a table and remains perfectly silent. Pamela, or somebody, asks 'What are you doing, George?' Answer from the depths, 'Catching the rabbits.' Due time for that operation having elapsed, he emerges and visits the King making profound salaams. After that interview he disappears again under the table to everyone's surprise. Again asked, 'What are you doing?' answer, 'catching partridges' and so on. Then, clapping his hands he announces, 'Now its Ogre-time!' Dick, having been recaptured, and stuck back into his chair is told to be the Ogre and is finally devoured. At the end, George claps his hands and says, 'the game is over.' He adds, 'it was difficult as Dick don't act as well as in the nursery.' Dick's 'acting' having consisted in a steady refusal to recognize that anything in particular was going on, varied by frantic efforts to escape.

I got away for two days' partridge-driving. Papa, I am glad to say, is now completely wrapped up in that sport to the neglect of golf. He will make it excellent in time. As it was we shot 59½ brace and 51 brace, the two days.

All luck to you, dear old boy.—Ever your loving brother,
GEORGE.

P.S.—Don't go 'poking about' too much when reconnoitring!

370

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 2nd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Methuen, as I expected, is over the river all right and is now re-constructing the bridge. We have sent him large re-inforcements.

Buller has a fine force with him now for the relief of Ladysmith and is going quietly to work in a way which inspires great confidence.

Percy's school has broken up over another case of sore throat. When he is out of quarantine may I send him to Clouds? I don't know how to amuse and occupy him here. He looks well.

Love to all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.
Just off to see Mary.

371

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 7th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am delighted to hear that Papa is better and that it is not influenza.

I shall come to you on Saturday. All is going well but our preparations will not mature for the two blows before Ladysmith and Kimberley, before Saturday or Sunday. This is Buller's birthday, I have sent him a wire of congratulation.

Now we must just sit tight and wait four or five days.

Best love to Papa and all.—Ever most loving son,
GEORGE.

372

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 8th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—We come by the 3 p.m. to-morrow.

If you see in the Papers that the wire is cut and a culvert blown up at Graspan you need not mind. We are glad rather than otherwise that the Boers opposed to Methuen should have divided their forces. He has food and ammunition and ought to smash them in detail.—
Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

373

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
December 9th, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—‘I hope you are quite well’—What a lot of meaning there is in that conventional start. I suppose others than school-boys and servants always began in that way in old days when friends were lost to sight for weeks and months. Our friends, the Boers, have managed to reproduce a bit of the Past. Buller is going to work ‘secundum artem’ and does not mean to be hurried. Still we count the days and they seem very long. The papers say that you have had news of Methuen’s victories. He seems to have plugged away well.

One of my best old Coldstreamer pals, poor ‘Box’ Stopford was killed and Sidney Earle, who had a future before him.

We are all well and going strong. I was to have had one day’s shooting yesterday but had to chuck it as I found that I must keep my nose to the grindstone. Perf has turned up in great glee, the school having broken up over two cases of diphtheritic sore throat. He is all right and a red-hot soldier.

I am off to Clouds to-night for Sunday.

Your letter to Minnie is the only intelligible account I have seen of the fight on October 30th.

Your friend Holdsworth has done a smart bit of work from Rhodesia.

Wire lots of news when you get out.

Heaps of love from all.—Ever your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

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*To Charles Boyd*35 PARK LANE, W.,
15.12.99.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I am all for being hanged, politically, but only if that function prove but an integral part of some organic scheme for increasing the defence of the Empire. I did not answer your letter, but I meant to. I meant to say that after Monday I was at your command. Tuesday for choice, and so on, with decreasing ‘empressement.’ Because I want to get away if Buller wins. But Tuesday is yours anyhow. Wednesday too. And Thursday at a pinch or if Buller is checked on the Tugela.

I rejoice in this ferment of the Press and am all for ‘hanging’ if they, on reflection, think that will serve. I doubt if Captain Sinclair, M.P., could have done more than I have as U.S. for War. But that is my blasted egotism.

Seriously—the battle is being fought to-day—is now over. If we have won, for Heaven’s sake keep the Press on to their task of pressing for *change*.

If we have lost, why, then I shall have a freer hand than ever before.—Yours ever, GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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*To his Brother*35 PARK LANE,
December 15th, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I suppose that Buller and Clery fought to relieve you to-day. I daresay you were out to help them. So we have been thinking of you—if possible—more than ever.

Thank God! we are all together here now. And whatever it costs we have a free hand.

I may be wrong, but I remember that when I raced or boxed as a boy the feeling that one was beginning to *feel*

always meant that the other fellow was having a deuce of a time. I may be wrong—as I said—but I believe the Boers have had a beastly time both around Ladysmith and before Kimberley. If so we shall float in. If not . . . Why, then, we will go on until all is blue.

Methuen's column have been hard hit. Some of my oldest pals—Stopford and Wilty—have been killed. But if they go on I believe they will find that they have given as good as they got.

Anyway we have a free hand at last, and shall plug in men and horses until there is 'standing room only' in South Africa.

Give my respects to Sir George White and many messages to Hamilton, Rawlinson and all my friends.—Your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 16th, 1899.

MOST BELOVED MAMMA,—We must acknowledge that Buller's failure is a disappointment. And we must all pull ourselves together and pull together. Our grandfathers had a much worse time of it. They must have felt bitterly disappointed when the Walcheren expedition failed. They must have feared for the whole future of their nation when the Fleet mutinied at the Nore.

To-day we have a smaller disappointment and we have, as against it, the whole Army, the whole Nation, and the whole Empire with us and at one in the quiet determination to win at the earliest moment.

If we are called to bear greater anxiety over Ladysmith and our darling Guy, we will remember that we are doing it not for to-day but for the *future* of our nation.

As for the measures which we have taken :—

We propose,—this is private until confirmed by Cabinet now sitting—

1. To take up all the fastest ships.

2. To send out the 7th and 8th Divisions ; 8 battalions of Militia ; special corps of volunteers and yeomanry.

Three Cavalry Regiments.

To accept further contingents from Canada and Australia.

To go on forming Mounted Infantry in South Africa.

3. We shall send Lord Kitchener to command in the middle over French and Gatacre.

The Fifth Division—Sir C. Warren's—is just about to arrive. Seven battalions are due in during the next three days, some of them to-day and to-morrow.

I know that you and darling Minnie will try to bear this disappointment and to have faith that our Guy will be saved to serve his country.

You must not think this letter gloomy. You would get no help from my telling you things are going well if I did not admit the contrary when it occurs.

I have an unconquerable belief that they will go well again, and sooner, perhaps, than we dare hope to-day.

Buller's troops are not shaken. He wires that they were ready to fight on indefinitely, but that the heat had tired them and not seeing his way to victory, he chose not to incur further loss.

I am glad that he avoids flashy attempts and ' gallery fulls.'

Give all my love to Papa, Minnie, Dorothy and the dear children.—Ever your most devoted son, GEORGE.

377

To his Father

WAR OFFICE

December 20th, 1899.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I have not had a moment in which to answer your letter.

Yes, I should lay the facts of the case before the Secretary to the Lord Mayor's Fund. If that fails, then write to the head office of the S. and S.F.A.

The Lord Mayor cannot divert money allocated *before*

the conference at the Mansion House. But, as he took powers to do so in respect of all sums subscribed subsequently, it is a mere matter of book-keeping.

White wires that he can hold Ladysmith for a month. Long before that Buller will have been re-inforced by the whole of Sir C. Warren's Division.

That is private. The Press think it is going to De Aar. But the Cabinet decided on Saturday to relieve White at all costs.

The 'Imperial Yeomanry' is my child. I invented it after lunch on Sunday and it is already a fine bantling. May it live and prosper. To bring it to birth has been a business. But I rejoice like the woman in the Bible over a man child that is born. Don't say it was my idea. It is now taken up officially. And I want no more.—
Your devoted son, GEORGE.

378

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 23rd, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I know that you will feel the loss of Westminster. It is a great loss to many. I cannot say how sorry I am. It is the hardest on poor little Meg who has just had a baby and said Good-bye to Dolly.¹

But we won't forget that he remained young all his life and used his youth to make life happy for all about him.

That is what we have all got to do just now. To remain young and keep everyone going.

I long to come to you but it is out of the question. Arthur and Lansdowne are both staying here. We are busy all day and, therefore, to be envied by all the other inhabitants of this island.

The 'Imperial Yeomanry' is visibly beginning to exist and it is the finest and most striking creation of all this storm and stress. Meanwhile I think things in South Africa look a lot better than they did on Saturday morning last. Ladysmith can hold out for six weeks. The Fifth

¹ Duke and Duchess of Teck.

Division is arriving at Durban. The Boers are not advancing. Our reinforcements are coming in. Our hands are free. The Empire is behind us.

So this is not such a bad Christmas after all : certainly it is one which we shall never forget.

Best love to Papa and Minnie, Ditchmouse, the children, Bun and all.—Ever your most devoted son, GEORGE.

P.S.—I am wonderfully well, and to my joy, a little thinner.

379

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
December 23rd, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—Bless you ! I trust and believe you are safe and that we shall relieve Ladysmith.

We have had a great blow in the sudden death of Westminster. He was the kindest man I knew and his loss is a great one to many.

Meanwhile we are straining every nerve here to get our men and, above all, horses. That's the pinch.

I have worked day and night for so long that I forget what life used to be like. But we *do* get on. The spirit in this country is magnificent. Practically everyone has volunteered ! We hope to raise 8000 mounted infantry through the Yeomanry. The grind of that on top of mobilising and shipping off the regulars is a caution. But as I said, we *do* get on from day to day and hour to hour.

Best love to you.—Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

380

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
December 27th, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—This is indeed good news !¹ It must cheer your heart for the New Year. It is delight-

¹ A friend of his brother's when in charge of the signalling station of the relieving force succeeded in getting news that he was well and telegraphed it home to Clouds.

ful to think that up to *last* Sunday we are in touch and hearing with our dear old Guy.

Well, I feel as if I had nothing to *say*, having so much to *do*. I am becoming specialised like a machine and, whilst I know more about my work than I ever expected to learn in years, I seem to have forgotten everything else.

I am *wonderfully* well, less tired every day. Things come easy to me that used to be difficult. I sleep like a top eight hours a night and take on committees and long memoranda without any previous nervousness.

Arthur has been *perfect* and Lansdowne more kind than I can say. I dine there whenever I like, and talk over all plans comfortably. Everybody here and at the Imperial Yeomanry head quarters help in every way. Even the Admiralty have made my path easy. Lansdowne is so busy that he has handed over the transport communications with Goschen to me. And we get on capitally.

Dear Bendor has cabled asking to stay out, which is just what I wished and expected from him.

We don't know Buller's plans. But he seems serene and his troops are in good form. There really is nothing more to say but lots more to do. So my love to darling Minnie and you all, and best congratulations and jubiliations over dear Guy's wire.—Ever your most loving son,
GEORGE.

381

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
December 30th, 1899.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—A merry Christmas to you and a happy New Year and many of them !

Pratt's wire to say you were well up to December 24th made all the difference to our New Year.

We have been plugging away, Christmas and Sundays. Arthur Balfour, Lansdowne and self lunch and dine together most days and keep at it.

Buller asked for eight thousand Mounted Infantry. Phew ! But we mean to do it. We are working it through the Yeomanry, using the Cols : and depots as recruiting and drill centres. The men are coming in ; we ought to get off two thousand by January 15th to 20th, and the rest at about five hundred to a thousand a week. Ships are the real trouble, but we are doing them privately and everyone is bucking up like blazes.

I have not been able to get to Clouds for Sundays for some weeks but all are well and Minnie cheerful and very brave. Give my love to all my friends and wire for anything which you want.

Best luck attend you, dear old boy.—Ever your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

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To his Mother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
December 31st, 1899.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I must write to you again to-day before ‘turning to.’ I am alone here but not a bit downcast. This is the end of a year of travail and sorrow. And now we shall go on ‘In newness of life.’ That has been my motto for six years. It suddenly struck me one day in the Communion service, just after little Percy broke his thigh. ‘In Newness of Life’—it jumped at me out of the page and always does so now. I took it for a sign ; and it is my emblem and the banner I fight under. When I die I wish it to be put on my slab.

I know how you must feel Westminster’s death. But, for my part, I will not take any death, nor will I accept the breaking-up of any happy stretch of life, as an end. Not I ! ‘A thing of beauty’ is to me ‘a joy for ever.’ Not one Flower of Beauty and Kindness can ever die. Never. I am here alone to-day but twelve years of loving-kindness and delight at Saughton are singing to me in chorus. Clouds and Wilbury and Isel wind in their Antiphones from the Triforium and the Dome. All that

you, most darling Mamma, have been to me, Papa, Mary, Guy, Madeline and Pamela; all that Sibell has been to me; Cuckoo, Lettice, Benny and Perf. I have it all for ever. These are 'The Voices of the Angels.' I sit alone like the Beadsman; but I tell my beads on the Rosary of Loving-Kindness.

I can feel, more than most, the keen, heart-dividing, strain of music in Pagan Poetry :—

Quo desiderio veteres renovamus amores

Atque olim amissas flemus amicitias.

‘With what bereavement do we not renew the memory of
ancient loves,

And weep for friendships lost long since.'

That is beautiful. But they are *not* lost. *Amor vincit omnia*. Love conquers all in Newness of Life.

So let us take 1900 into our arms.—Ever your most
loving son,
GEORGE.

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To Wilfrid Ward

35 PARK LANE, W.,
December 31st, 1899.

MY DEAR WILFRID,—A thousand thanks for the beautiful book and for your letter. I will take the book to Sibell if I get a chance of going to Saughton, or keep it, to share with her, when she returns.

I am alone here with memories and work. But I am not at all unhappy. I begin to see that it will not be so very terrible to be old and alone. We are led on to understand the eternity of all fair things by intimate experience, and apart from metaphysical speculation.

Now that Westminster, that kind heart and chivalrous gentleman, is dead; that Bendor is away; Cuckoo married; my little Percy going to Eton in less than a year; myself without a prospect beyond labour at the demands of the moment; the whole past twelve years rise up and sing together of the loving-kindness and

beauty which has been round me. No gentle act or graceful movement of those who have adorned my life can ever die.

So I sit alone at the end of this year of travail and anxiety, rejoicing. And I thank you from a full heart for your gift and friendship.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

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To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
January 6th, 1900.

DEAREST OLD GUY,—The weeks begin to go round faster and we hope that the relief of Ladysmith is now indeed at hand. We read in a Boer cable that six horsemen had escaped from Ladysmith. I dreamt that you were one of them as a Staff-officer reconnoitring a way out, and then, in my dream, you walked into the room and I was overjoyed to see you! So that's a good omen.

I have had no holiday, naturally, and have been at it Sundays included. The Daily Mail is attacking the Government in a violent and ignorant manner and the opposition will go for us when the House meets. That, I regret to say, will be probably on February 1st. I think I have a pretty good case. Anyway, I am keeping low like a Boer and shall not fire until they come into the open.

By the time you get this you will know that the 16th have at last got their show and that Stephen Frewen is to command. That, I infer, makes you a Major—so Hurrah for that.

We are all very well and Mamma and Minnie are getting more accustomed to the long strain. But it has been long and I hate to think of you cooped up, whilst the Cavalry are having such a good time with French about Colesberg.

Best of luck to you, dear old Boy.—Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

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*To his Mother*35 PARK LANE, W.,
January 7th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I have been waiting for *definite* news before writing. But it does not come.

Lord Lansdowne is away so I am in charge and have just sent all we have to the Papers. (6.30 p.m.) I infer that dear Guy was safe up to yesterday afternoon as White added to his second Heliograph that poor Lord Ava was dangerously wounded. He would have mentioned Guy if he had been hit.

I omitted from the cables only hints from White to Buller as to what he thought was going on among the enemy. If his guesses were right the enemy would have changed their dispositions; if wrong they would have known that White was in error. Any way they were mere guesses.

The facts are, as you will see by the papers, that the enemy attacked Ladysmith at 2.45 a.m. Saturday morning at Cæsar's camp, which is a part of our lines about one and a half miles south of Ladysmith. They were repulsed. They came on again in large numbers, and the fighting must have been heavy about 11 a.m. At 12.45 White heliographed that he had beaten them off; but they were still in large numbers and he expected another attack. Then the sun clouded over and we know no more. One can't help thinking, and almost hoping, that this will precipitate Buller's attack.

If any more news comes in I will add it.

11 p.m., Sunday night.

We have one more cable but it is inconclusive and tantalizing.

Buller received at 3.25 *to-day*, Sunday, a further message sent by White at 3.15 yesterday afternoon. The message, therefore, took twenty-four hours and must have been carried by a runner. The message was 'Attack renewed.'

There was no sun to-day ; so no news by Heliograph. And we cannot know how this great fight ended.

Buller explained this, viz. :—that the sun being covered he could not get news.

He added in his cable that there is a *rumour* in the Camp to-day that White won at 5 p.m. yesterday and took four hundred prisoners.

I cut that out of the news for the papers. If it is true we shall know it and rejoice. If it is *not* true the publication of a rumour will only annoy people more.

We *never* cut out bad news ; only *guesses* at good news ; because what is the use of guesses ?

Well, darling, these are difficult days for us all here but not so difficult as for the dear fellows out there.—
Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

386

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
January 8th, 1900.

MOST DARLING,—This good news lifts a load of anxiety. The last thirty-six hours have been among the most unpleasant.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

Enclosure :

From General Buller to Secretary of State for War

FRERE CAMP, 8 January.

Following message just received from General White dated 2 p.m. yesterday. An attack was commenced on my position but chiefly against Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill. The enemy were in great strength and pushed their attack with the greatest courage and energy. Some of our entrenchments on Wagon Hill were three times taken by the enemy and retaken by us. The attack continued until 7.30 p.m. One part of our position was occupied by the enemy the whole of the day but at dusk in a very heavy rainstorm they were turned out of this position at the point of the bayonet in the most gallant manner by the Devon regiment led by Colonel Park. Colonel Ian Hamilton commanded on Wagon Hill and

rendered valuable services. The troops had a very trying time and behaved excellently. They are elated at the service they have rendered to the Queen. The enemy were repulsed everywhere with very heavy loss greatly exceeding my side which will be reported as soon as lists are completed.

[Added in pencil] Gratias redde Domino!

G. W.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
January 9th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I saw dear Minnie for a moment this morning. I was hoping that you did not know we were on tenter-hooks but she tells me Bun saw the 'hard-pressed' wire at the post-office.

I had cut out the words 'hard-pressed' and the *rumour* that we had won. But Lord Lansdowne who came back late on Sunday night put them in again. I thought it a mistake to say we were 'hard-pressed' and a mistake to publish a favourable rumour. However . . . Phew! . . . It is better now. How *splendidly* they fought! We have not got the *beastly* list yet. I will wire directly the 'pig' comes in.

I have been working away Sundays and all, but am very fit. I almost want the House now, so as to have more work. I don't wish for anything but work and sleep. Not that I don't sleep; I do and right well. But I look forward to more work. Think of those dear fellows fighting seventeen hours! The least one can do is to work for seventeen here.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
January 12th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Well, we feel better to-day. Dear old Guy unhit and *not sick*. And old Buller at last

on the move. He is on the Tugela about fifteen miles west of Colenso and eighteen from Ladysmith. So we must pray for his success and we must believe that he will succeed.

I am so sorry about Thesiger.

Love to all.—Ever your most loving son, GEORGE.

389

To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
January 12th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—Here is mail day round again and after a week that has fairly made us perspire. Last Saturday's fight must have been magnificent. We got news of it. But, after White's heliogram at 3.15 p.m. 'am hard pressed' the sun went in and we did not know whether you had won for forty-eight hours. Then we did not get the casualty list even of officers till to-day. So there have been many anxious hearts.

Now we know that Buller is at last on his way to relieve you, and the whole country is praying for his success. Dear old Boy, you must pull through somehow.

People here behave very well but the newspapers which bucked most at the start, and then, after the first reverses, kept patting themselves on the back for not attacking the Government, are now in full cry against us. They howl every day for somebody's head.

I have to defend the show when the House meets on January 30th, and a Holy Show it is to defend! However, I shall enjoy my chance of hitting back in a small way.

Darling Minnie and Mamma and your children and all of us are very well. We only long to have you South of the Tugela. I have dreamt of you twice this week very vividly. I thought you came back safe and sound and hope it is an omen.

I have worked on and on until I am dizzy. But things here are shaping. We are piling up armaments and raising corps and shoving away like blazes.

If they turn out the Government I shall come out as a Yeoman: but I don't think they will. You keep up your end and we'll keep up ours. So good luck to you and my best love.—Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

390

To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
January 18th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Your last letter made me feel that you were more anxious. Of course, Buller may not succeed, but on the other hand, he has a good plan and it has been well launched and directed through the initial stages. The issue rests with the God of Battles.

I may now tell you his plan which we have known for the last week. He has seized a position on the Tugela at Potgieters drift about fifteen miles due West of Colenso and has a good artillery position. Warren has crossed five miles further off with twelve battalions, 36 guns and 1500 cavalry; he will try to turn the enemy's flank and, if he succeeds in over-lapping them the Ladysmith garrison can come up and join hands with him. Buller, meanwhile bangs at them with seven battalions and twenty guns. It is a good plan and, as I said, it has been started without a hitch. The issue we can only await with patience and faith.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

391

To his Father

WAR OFFICE,
January 24th, 1900.

MY DEAREST PAPA,—As you know, in the House it is the unexpected that happens. So I might be shot for a speech on the first day. I think this most improbable. It could only happen if Campbell-Bannerman opened with an outrageous speech.

I shall have, on the other hand, to speak in reply to Dilke's amendment to the Address. That would be Thursday or, more probably, Monday.

I have gone over the 'Strategy' of our Defence with Arthur Balfour more than once. He and I will have to bear the brunt, I shall generally have to speak first in reply whilst Arthur will wind up the debates.

So soon as the Address is voted I must bring in large War Estimates. As I shall have to make a set speech on that I shall try to avoid one on the Address. I know my case pretty well, so shall wait for attacks from Dilke or others and make a debating reply. You must remember that I made three 'set' speeches last year and the House may weary of them.

When I have got my big War Supplementary Estimate, I shall have to introduce the Estimates proper. That will be an even bigger business. For we hope to bring in some large proposals. It is these which have kept me so hard at work during the last three weeks.

My programme is, therefore,

1. To lie low on the Address proper.
2. To make a debating reply to Dilke's amendment or any other criticising the conduct of the War.
3. To make a set speech in asking for funds to cover expense of War and repair of waste up to April 1.
4. To make a set speech asking for Estimates for
 Ordinary expenses.
 Future conduct of the War.
 New proposals.

You may imagine what the work has been to get these three things *done*. Talking about them will comparatively be child's play.

I go to Osborne this afternoon by command. I shall try to get to Clouds Saturday for a quiet Sunday's rumination over my case in the smoking room.

Best love to darling Mamma, Dorothy and all.—Your most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—The relief of Ladysmith is going to be a slow business. But none the less effectual, I hope, for that.

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To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
January 26th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I had hoped to write you a cheery letter, but we hear to-day that Warren has retired again from Spion Kop.

It is disappointing. . . . Take great care of yourself *whatever* happens. Remember that Sir Leslie Rundle had to give it up at Potchefstroom and is a Lt. General at 44 years of age. What I hate is that you should be cooped up and wasted at such a time.

The House meets on Tuesday. I shall have hard work. The House and Country only want us to do more and if they had their way would embark the male population of this island 'en masse' to South Africa. Things are working smother at this end. The trade expanded for ammunition and stores, and we can go on pouring stuff into South Africa until our friends the enemy are tired of the game.

Minnie and your children are very well and Mamma and all of us. But we want to hear of your relief very badly, dear old boy.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

393

To Charles Waldstein

35 PARK LANE, W.,
February 2nd, 1900.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—How can I thank you? True kindness from a real friend is among the best gifts of life. But your letter ¹ is something in addition, and something very helpful and of great value. It is a critical appreciation from a trained critic, and it makes me believe that I did create the effect which I set myself to create; did, in short, do the particular job to which I set my hand.

¹ A letter of appreciation of the great speech George Wyndham made in the House of Commons on Feb. 1st 1900 on the South African war.

Any man must be pleased to know that, and he can only learn it from such an appreciation as yours.

I must try to see you on Friday night and, in any case, next week.—Yours ever,

GEORGE W.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
February 3rd, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—The news of Guy *was* delightful. I am very glad that my speech pleased people but rather embarrassed by the avalanche of letters it has brought down—wonderfully kind letters—I will send them to you when they are acknowledged.

I longed to come to you all to-day but, the talking being over, the work has to be done. It is beginning to shape a little at last. Arthur is helpful as ever. We have been together most of to-day and shall be to-morrow.

I had a wonderful House to talk to on Thursday and when I sat down I thought they would never stop cheering. I spoke one hour and thirty-four minutes and left out about a quarter of the stuff I had prepared. I toned down the ending which I had conceived in a spirit of bitterness and scorn. But they had been so kind and I felt so keenly that all should stand together.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
February 14th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Have had no time to write. Monday's speech fell, as I expected, far below the other. But my brief was a bad one. Since then I have done fairly well in debate. I was on the bench from 3.30 to 12 midnight both days with 40 minutes off for dinner. But I am less tired to-day than for some time past.

Unluckily my secretary is in bed with influenza. If I can tide over Thursday and Friday I shall hope to get more of what I want before the Report stage.

Love to Papa and Ditch.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

WAR OFFICE,
February 21st, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am overjoyed by Guy's telegram and most thankful.

I am holding my breath to-day. The quiet wintry sunlight is bathing the town but out there *the* fight has been waged since dawn. One can only hope and pray. It is better that there should be a great fight. The worst of the past months has been the absence of 'focusing.' To-day the opposing forces are focussed with a vengeance.

The Boers have sent every man to re-inforce Cronje and Roberts has got all his men up; so that some fifty thousand—taking both sides—are I suppose now fighting.

This *must* have drained them *largely* from Natal and I *do* hope that Buller will push right home.

I will wire directly I hear. Even if we are checked we must not mind. They will not be able to get back to Natal while Roberts' Army is 'in being' even if not victorious.

Love to all.—Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

397

To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
February 22nd, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—To my great relief the pitched battle did not come off. I was anxious all yesterday. The determination to assault a strong position at dawn sounded too like many a previous announcement. How-

ever, as you will see by the papers, Roberts reconnoitred Cronje's position on the afternoon of the 20th—Tuesday—and relinquished his intention. He bombarded Cronje all yesterday and drove off the reinforcements which sought to reach him. That is much better. Our casualties were only two officers and four men wounded. Cronje is still pegged down under heavy fire in a position which must be most uncomfortable. The enemy must make further efforts to relieve him which entails further withdrawal of their forces from Natal. Some of the prisoners taken yesterday admitted that they had come by train from Ladysmith.

Briefly the situation is exactly reversed. Cronje's position is what White's was. We ought to be able to invest him and make the reinforcements attack us. This is cheering and an immense relief. I felt anxious all yesterday and this morning. Now I say 'Phew!' and await developments serenely. I come to you Saturday.
—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

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To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
February 23rd, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I hope with all my heart that you will soon be your own man again. We have had great ups and downs of hope and disappointment. But I have believed on right through. Spion Kop was a bad knock; so was the next try. But this time surely, surely, Buller must do the trick.

It is clear that Roberts' action at Paarde Kraal is drawing off some of your unpleasant neighbours.

I have had a hard spell of work, defending the War Office in Parliament; had to make seven speeches one after the other. But that is all 'gas and gaiters' to the grind inside the office. I hope we shall get the Cavalry back to four squadrons in the field. I hope we shall build up the Militia. I hope we shall build up reserves

of war-like stores. In short, I am all hope, but it means a daily grind and constant checks.

We are all very well. Minnie too good for words and Mamma in better spirits.

Dearest old boy, I trust that before the next mail Ladysmith will be relieved. My love to all my friends who have helped in your magnificent defence.—Your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

399

To his Brother

35 PARK LANE, W.,
March 1st, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—Bless you ! I said in my last that you would be relieved before this mail : and, thank God ! you are. You must have had a terrible time. I am too happy to write. All these months I have been explaining to everyone that all would come right and now there doesn't seem any need to say anything to anybody. I only send you my best love and rejoice with you and over you and over all the brave lot of you. Give my love to Hedworth Lambton, Harry Rawlinson, Dr. Jim and all my friends, and please convey my respectful gratitude and admiration to Sir George White.

I have bust up from work with a throat and so forth ; but mean to be right for Thursday when I have to move the Estimates.

I go to Clouds to-morrow. Darling Minnie and your children are all very well, and so is Mamma. She has felt the long strain but has been wonderfully patient. Keep well and don't overwork yourself until you have picked up strength. And so Hooray !—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

400

To his Mother

March 1st, 1900.

MY MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I am too happy to write. At last, thank God, there is no need to write, no occasion

to speak, nothing to do or say but just to be quite happy.

I knew when the envelope was put into my hand that it must be the only news we have really wanted or else—as before—and another long grinding wait with all the due explanations that it was really all right, and just what one expected; and that it would make no difference in the long run and . . . and . . . and all the dreary rest of it, on which one has subsisted and fed others for four months. And now one need say nothing. That measures the amount of relief.

I am coming by the 11 a.m. to-morrow and shall not return to the House until I move the Estimates on Thursday. I am bringing Hanson to work with me.

I enclose the two historic telegrams.

The 'Cronje' one as it arrived 'en clair'—the document which Lansdowne read to the Lords and sent on to me for the Commons.

It bears his pencil note and some full-stops which I hastily put in so as to read it out without running one sentence into another.

Now I must stop and go on with my rejoicing.

Love to all.—Ever your most loving and most thankful son,

GEORGE.

401

To his Mother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
March 21st, 1900.

MOST DARLING,—Well you see I extracted something out of the 'Hunker' at last! He wired, dated yesterday, 'Well. Camp near Ladysmith.' That is his answer to my 'How and where are you.'

How nice it is to be in touch with the rascal again.—
Ever most loving son,

GEORGE.

P.S.—I dreamt last night that Guy had wired so vividly that when I woke and remembered he had not I felt disappointed. But he had—a clear case of telepathy and the Corsican brothers.

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To his Brother

WAR OFFICE,
April 7th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—Your letter to me by the second mail after your relief touched me deeply. I had been thinking of the banking up of our letters. They must have deluged you.

We had a characteristic conversation one Sunday morn at breakfast at Clouds. Your Minnie and I happened to say that we had written regularly. It was at the rather depressing point—Spion Kop period. This led to Papa bursting out with ‘I’ve given up writing long ago.’ Then we had a real ‘ferret’ disquisition on the proper attitude to be maintained against the chances and accidents of war. I proved à la Seneca and Marcus Aurelius that it would be quite as sensible to stop writing under ordinary circumstances at home, since we cannot tell from day to day whether our relatives and friends may not have taken a bad toss out hunting or caught scarlet fever.

Your darling children had a rare old time at Clouds all the winter. Sometimes their chance remarks made us rather choky. Little George announced one evening in a high falsetto ‘I’m glad father’s in South Africa as if he’s wounded he’ll get well soon.’ Then Dick chimed in, ‘I hope father’s coming back soon, is he on the ship yet?’ But really, Mamma and Minnie have been wonderfully cheerful and Papa more like himself than ever; taking a sniff when any allusion was made to our preparations and the generals, but otherwise hurling himself and the whole family into a whirl of golf, riding, bridge, and billiards, by way of distraction.

I have knocked off to read letters from Harry Rawlinson and Johnny Hamilton. They tell me you had a sharp attack of fever but that you are well again. I hope that Lord Roberts may send for your Brigade. You cannot get a real chance, I fear, in Natal. I don’t like to write

all that I think about the relief campaign, and, as all's well that ends well, the less said the better. Bendor has been at the front with Roberts and writes in the highest spirits and in the vein of an old campaigner. Scarborough, Arty Grosvenor, Gerry Grosvenor, Bertie Grosvenor, Chesham and Charlie Cavendish, Dolly Teck, are all at the front so that we have no relations left in this country. All of us with our nearest in the Show keep together quietly and talk nothing but shop all the day long. Hamilton writes of you in highest terms of praise. You are a Major now by rights, and I devoutly hope that you will get a real chance at cavalry work before the war is over.

I am going to Clouds for Easter. Have bought a beautiful little black of Dolly Teck's. I want a rest of a few days badly as the work has been very severe in Parliament and in this office organising an extempore army and large camps to impress the 'Frogs.' The Volunteers, Yeomen and Militia are capital fellows, but rather exacting, and so they refer every point to me through their M.P.s instead of through the proper channels. I have to do the work twice over and smooth away the inevitable hitches and dissensions.

I enclose a note from Sibell who is very well. Perf is well and riding Mamma's pony every day.

No time for more. God bless you, dear old boy. Keep well and may you get the real good chance you deserve after all your labour and stone-walling.—Ever your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

403

To his Brother

CLOUDS, SALISBURY,

Good Friday, April 12th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—Here I am at Clouds for a short easy, and thinking of you all the time. I was delighted, but not surprised, to hear that your General

had recommended you for mention in despatches. Hamilton also spoke highly of you, but I cannot help wishing very strongly that you had a fairer chance in your first campaign. Natal is no place for Cavalry and the siege has played the deuce with your brigade. I am anxious also over the many shifts and changes in the commands. French, Hunter, Hamilton are all gone to the other theatre of operations. Buller's generals seem rather at sixes and sevens. And all this complicates your path. The army in time of war becomes as unpleasantly competitive as my own profession of politics. And I know—none better—how much harm can be done carelessly to the younger men in a profession by the loose talk of cliques. Hamilton tells me he hopes you will go to Roberts, and Frewen writes that he wants you as 2nd in Command. Naturally I can make nothing of all this at such a distance, and I can only hope and pray that all good fortune may attend you.

There is a great inclination, I notice, to crab Buller. But that may be a good reason for sticking it out with him now that so many have been taken from him. Some of the Staff who know little of Cavalry are disposed to crab it and to expect things from it for which our Cavalry, at any rate, has not been trained. They knock out the men who don't take risks and they knock out the men who do. But, again, I can only wish you good luck in these troubled waters.

We hope that Roberts will move in two or three days and revolutionize the situation once more. Till then we can only wait and possess ourselves in patience.

Your letters have been admirable, much the best I have seen. Write in your next about your prospects and plans.

And now God bless you, old Guy, go on and prosper.—
Ever your most loving brother, GEORGE.

P.S.—You will be gazetted Major next Friday, so this is to congratulate you.

404

To his Brother

CLOUDS,

SALISBURY, April 20th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—The mail has come round very fast this week. Your last letter was very interesting and judicial. The conclusions, almost all, tallied with those I had already formed.

I hear that Roberts wired for you and Gough but that Buller would not give you up. On the whole I daresay this is best. When Roberts gets into the Kroonstad-Harrismith line the Van Reenan ought to be clear and in that case I imagine that one or more of Buller's Cavalry Brigades will come through to co-operate in the final advance.

I have been riding a great deal; twice to Stockton with Mary and Dorothy, to St. Giles alone, and to White Sheet Castle with Mary and Cynthia, who rides well. We then concentrated on the Golf Hut and lunched with Arthur, Hugo and Professor Lodge. The Spring has come at last and the Down air is magnificent. I thought of you and our ride to Yarnfield Gate. We all drank your health on Thursday as 'Major Wyndham.'

I fought hard against the publication of the Spion Kop despatches. It can do no good and I was more than ready to defend their non-publication. Now I shall have to defend their publication of which I did not approve. But that is part of my profession!

We have great accounts of Benny, who is very popular but shoves himself too much into the firing line when carrying messages, as at Driefontein.

I saw 'Très facile' [a horse] looking very well at Stockton. Ste writes excellent letters about the 16th.

Bless you old boy.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

405

To his Brother

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
April 27th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—We had to do without news of you last week owing to the 'Mexican's' mishap. I am back again at work with my friend Mr. MacNeil asking questions every day. Shortly I shall have to defend the publication of the Spion Kop Despatches. I was strongly against publication and scarcely believed they would be given to the world. And the humour of it is that I must make a case of it.

My own view is that despatches in our little wars have grown and grown until Generals-in-Command feel bound to send us home all the reports of all the Brigadiers and even Colonels and Majors under them. But, in truth, the Spion Kop affair was but an incident in the Relief of Ladysmith, since then successfully accomplished, which in turn is but a phase of the campaign confined to one portion of the theatre of operations. Personally I should have preferred that Buller should have digested all the reports and, when Ladysmith was relieved, have sent a dry and succinct account of the various moves.

I can find no precedent for such voluminous communications and still less for their publication with the single exception of Maiwand. Isandula was dismissed in a few lines. MacNeil's Zeriba in one paragraph of a despatch *five months* after the fight. Crawford was not publicly censured for the use of his Cavalry in the Crimea. The Charge of the Light Brigade is knocked off in one and a half lines. Why then, I ask myself, 45 pages of printed matter on an inconclusive operation? Let us leave all this to the German who will write the history of the War.

It is true that Roberts only says of Buller what Buller said of himself. And that he accompanies one point against Buller—did not assert himself soon enough—with five points for him. But I see no sense in publishing this.

It has nothing to do with Generalship. Having sent Warren and becoming anxious over his proceedings it was natural to 'lie up.' 'Lying up' it was natural to prompt. The exact moment for 'taking charge' is hardly a point upon which the public need be invited to form a judgment. But it will all be forgotten in a day or two. While it lasts there is Hell to pay here. Publication was a huge blunder.

I suppose Roberts will swing forward soon.

From here there is none but good news. We are all well and fit.

Keep well.—Ever your most loving brother,

GEORGE.

406

To Charles Boyd

SAUGHTON,
20.5.00.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I have promised my mite towards the Holman Hunt portrait.

I trust that you celebrated Mafeking with adequate insobriety. As I passed from Pall Mall to Mrs. B. P.'s thrice, and back to Pall Mall, and 'da capo,' and so on, till 2 or 3 in the morning, I had 'a need, an absolute need'—as the poet sings of Charles Baxter. Here was the moment; but where was the man? Not that the other million or so failed. They did well, they rode 5 together on the tops of cabs, with flags and the Devil's orchestra; they climbed lamp-posts and conducted choruses of some 2 to 3 thousand voices. They did their best. And their best was beyond any previous estimate of their versatility and resource. But this was the occasion for Baxter. What would he 'not have done, England my own!' The Great Imperialist, the archetype Brawler, born, I now see clearly, nurtured and mellowed for this one night and end. Five miles of streets abandoned by the police; 500,000 spirits willing to be led, had their 'natural leader' but appeared. Where *was* Baxter? Had he shown, there must have been an unprecedented coup d'état.

Sir Newton would have disappeared with, it may be, none to say by what means or whither. Is there not the Embankment and the dark silent river? Sir Newton, I say, would have known his turtles no more and Charles Baxter would have been acclaimed Lord Mayor of London.
—Yours ever, GEORGE W.

407

To his Brother

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE, S.W.,
May 25th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—I suppose you are hard at it again by now. By the papers Dundonald's Brigade seems to have had most of the lime-light lately, but your turn must be coming. I am sorry for Bethune's squadron. But they made a good fight for it. The papers here are quite absurd, so are the M.P.s. My difficulty is to go on answering seriously and not to break out à la Bismarck and tell them exactly what I think. I have had another chill and lost my voice yesterday! There is something comic in this. I had to hand over my answers to Powell Williams and go home to bed. But I'm not ill. The doctor says I'm sound as a bell only tired out. Luckily I shall get a pull next week with the Whitsun holidays.

Our Home Defence Scheme is going very very well. 179 out of 220 volunteer battalions have accepted the month's training. We have 30,000 old soldiers back for the Royal Reserves etc., etc., and we have just organised the Field Tables of three Army Corps. For Infantry we have four Guards (one Irish) 14 line (8 new Battalions) Royal Reserves—old soldiers—16 battalions, Militia 29, Volunteers 12, Total 75. For Cavalry we turn the Households into two regiments two squadrons of each plus Royal Reserves=1 Brigade. 1st D.G.s., 2nd D.G.s., 7th Hussars=2nd Brigade, 3rd D.G.s., 21st Lancers, Royal regiment (i.e. old soldiers) D.G.s.=3rd Brigade. The Reserve squadrons of the Regiment abroad swollen by details and recruits give us divisional Cavalry.

And the three regiments of Corps Cavalry are the Royal Reserves of Dragoons, Hussars, Lancers.

So far so good. Artillery is the crux. We have the men but are—between you and me—gambling in the guns till August, when the new deliveries are due.

I daresay you can't follow all that, but it means a desperate amount of drive and excitement. The sheer grind of finding barracks, camps and officers for this levy is beyond belief.

The Yeomanry have been real bricks. They found us 10,500 for the War and now have recruited up to Establishment and *all* accepted a month's camp in Brigade, with a minimum of fourteen days for each man. The whole of the Militia is embodied under canvas.

We have camps all over the country, Aldershot, Salisbury Plain, Wolmer Forest, Altcar, Holywood, etc., etc.

The people here have backed up grandly and will really be disappointed if France does not declare war after the 'Exposition!'

For my part I hope for an easy between. Finish the War and, at any rate, send us back some guns in September. 'Guns and speed' is my motto.

Meanwhile the Charity War Funds boom. They have a National Bazaar on just now. Pamela, Manenai and Dorothy are selling every day. They took £20,000 the first.

In short the country is War-mad. And it grows from week to week. They went mad over Mafeking. Mad over the Queen's birthday and are now blatantly and truculently out of their minds.

I dread the re-action. But whilst it lasts I make hay. Between you and me, after six months' wrangling with the Treasury I have ten and a half millions for *reserves* of stores in addition to the sixty million Estimates and, by George, I have not done with them. If they mean to have an army they shall pay for it. And yet, the continual grind and push to get the jobs through is more than you can imagine.

We started this war with equipment for a force of 25,000 men. We are sending weekly stores for an Army

of 227,000 in South Africa ; repaying borrowings from India and the Navy ; increasing the Navy, re-arming the Volunteer Artillery with 4·7" guns ; re-clothing the whole army with a fighting dress and getting artillery for five Army Corps. The daily strain—the interviews with the Cabinet and the gun-makers with a running garden party and cross-examination of all the soldiers, M.P.s and journalists, who think they can help or want a job, has given me such a seven months at the gallop as I trust never to endure again. But as the man said, ‘ Demme, it’s life.’

Keep well, dear old boy, and bless you.—Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

408

To his Brother

SAUGHTON,
June 1st, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—At last ‘ we do begin to appropinque an end.’ The irreconcilables may stick before you till Roberts advances and then retire to Zoutpansberg. But short of that the back of the job is now broken. I cannot make out from the papers what your brigade has been doing. They only mention Dundonald’s, and it is not clear whether any one commands your Cavalry as a Division, or whether it remains in three independent Brigades.

Did I tell you that you were mentioned in despatches by White ? I kept it back for some time supposing that the Despatch would soon be published. But they are sitting on them all for the present so I let you know confidentially.

Give my love to Brock. Sibell delighted in his letter to her. Brock is mentioned in Despatches.

We have at last fixed up with the Treasury over reserves of guns and stores and I shall have to bring in a loan after Whitsun. The House rose at 3 a.m. on Tuesday morning. I went to Aldershot Tuesday and saw a Militia Field-day,

a Brigade division of Volunteer Artillery who manœuvre at the trot ! and other wonders.

If only the Government would 'drive' just now we could really have an Army. I dread all the steam going off in jubilations.

Your Minnie is looking wonderfully well, never saw her in better looks. She is house-hunting. I am going to tell her to cast an eye on a house near Stockton in Pamela's village. It is an old house near the church which the Bishop I think is restoring. A fine old Georgian house with a nice garden, large hall and staircase for about £130 or £150, nine miles from Clouds.

I took with me to Aldershot a Colonel Sanger, sent over by President M'Kinley to report on our Military system. The Yanks are supposed to be 'cute' so it is a rather flattering attention. I am doing all I can for the Colonel as I am a strong 'entente' man and M'Kinley has behaved very well to us over this war. Sanger is coming here next week and we are going to take 'pot-luck' with all the garrison Artillery, sub-marine miners, Militia, Yeoman and Volunteers in the N.W. District.

I suppose you hear the news long after we do. The War Office gets it last. For instance, the papers had Kruger's flight from Pretoria the day before yesterday. Roberts evidently knew nothing of it yesterday and we know nothing of it to-day. But it is clearly true.

I hope you are satisfied with the promotions in the 16th. They could not pass over Bethune for 2nd in Command but I hope he may apply for a Staff Colonelsy in which case I think you have a very good chance. But, perhaps, you would like Staff better and Command four years later. Let me know your views. I will try to discover whether the 16th go back to India or not, for a year. I hope *not*. South Africa will be very interesting for the next three years.

This is the first real 'easy' I have had since September 7th. You can't conceive what a whirl it has been in the War Office.

Best love to you old Boy and may we meet soon.—Your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

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To his Mother

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE,
LONDON, 13 June 1900.

MOST DARLING,—I am deeply grieved and so will you be by the list to-day. Dear Charlie Cavendish and Airlie. Poor B. B.¹ and Chesham and Lady Airlie and Mabel.²

Otherwise all the news is very good. We must get the fighting done and the sooner the better.

I had a short line from darling old Guy. He is very proud of his brigade and quite happy in his work. This relieves my mind for I had felt that he was pining to be at it again.

I cannot come next Saturday, as I must go to Perf for the sports. But on the 23rd I will come and hug you for your birthday.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

410

To his Brother

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE,
June 15th, 1900.

MY DEAREST OLD GUY,—You must have been enjoying yourself lately, I read that the 2nd Cavalry Brigade has been ‘smartly engaged.’

The steam was fairly up for doing the right thing by the Army in the early Spring when all the big-wigs were afraid. But it cooled down and contracted as our towns were relieved and the many capitals of the enemy taken in succession.

But now the ‘Boxers’ have come to the rescue. There is the Devil to pay in China and not a remote chance of the whole British Embassy in Peking being murdered. Heaven forbid! but the chance of it is very helpful. Nobody asks to-day where or when we can ever be at war again. If we have not 30,000 men in the Yantze Valley

¹ Lady Chesham.

² Young Lady Airlie.

by October I shall be surprised. We have got ten and a half millions for reserves of Stores; Artillery for five Army Corps and I hope to get an unlimited reserve of tested men up to 45 years of age, and increased bounties to the Militia, 'E pur se muove.'

All the same my life is absurd. Whilst I am at these big shows daily and hourly—with four new Bills to introduce on Volunteers, Manceuvres, etc., I have the arrears of routine and sudden sensations. For example, to-day, Salisbury Plain committee with 29 items on the agenda and Hell—not unnaturally—because on Monday they had an Aldershot Field-day of 18,000 men, a heat wave, 1080 casualties, 57 admissions for sun-stroke and four poor fellows killed!

Keep well, dear old boy. We are all very well and fit. Give my love to Brock.—Ever your most loving brother,
GEORGE.

411

*To Charles Boyd**Private.*HOUSE OF COMMONS,
6.vii.00.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I have no right to take paper of this size, for I am in debt to Time. But, like a good Izaak Gordon, he of the Hour-glass gives me twenty minutes of respite after dinner, and after reading your letter anyway I feel disposed to write before turning again to my Estimates and Bills. The Press does not understand us and most of us don't understand the Press. I sometimes hope that I do. At any rate I appreciate it.

But, to your letter: and, first, the *Medical Service in S. Africa*.

I agree with much that you say. But I know what the Press cannot, that A. J. B.'s whole energy has been spent in striving for weeks to get done precisely what they will in respect of China. Or, again, in helping towards organic changes in the Militia and War Office. Burdett-Coutts exasperates just the fringe that is left

of reasonableness. That accounts for thinness and the querulous note. I took up a position, (a) He (Burdett) has seen, and, until the contrary is proved by others who have seen, his evidence stands; but (b) you must grasp the march to Bloemfontein—the army of 40,000 dropped from the clouds into the enemy's capital—the slender cord of a single line subtending the arc of Lord Roberts' march, which had to be repaired before there was any communication between the two tips of the bow—the needs of 40,000 men in victuals and cartridges, etc., etc. Therefore, just listen to Lord Roberts, and have a full enquiry.

That was, that is, my position. But I know a great deal more. I know that we had not last September an Army adequate for the task. That we had not the reserve of stores for that, or any other Army. That our Medical Corps was (and is) inadequate to the exigencies of this or any other war. That our Director-General is an old, fossilized, cantankerous Scotchman. I know all that. And I know how to cure it. And, 'si j'étais Dieu,' I would cure it.

Take this as a short tip from me: Arnold Forster is right in saying that our Medical Department is inadequate. We have striven during 5 years to increase and perfect it, by voting increased pay, by granting military titles, etc., etc.

That and such devices will not serve. You cannot keep a staff in Peace adequate to the huge expansion of War on our present lines. You must revolutionise the whole system. And, mark you, this, what is true of the Medical Department, is true of the Artillery, of the Ships for transport, of the Chaplains even.

Why? Because even if you paid men £1000 a year they will not, being young and ambitious, take money to forego that birthright of ambition. No sum of money will induce the young, educated doctor to vegetate at Ballincollig and attend to influenza and venereal diseases.

Therefore, you must pay a staff, a leaven, *very highly*, and give them work of administration in the Royal Army

Medical Corps. But you must also have a contract with the great Hospitals and Medical Colleges for a Government subscription and an individual contract with the young keen men to come out in time of war, and also to attend at camps and during manœuvres.

I have discussed this scheme with men like Sir Michael Foster and others in the House, who swing the Universities, and they will back me against the R. A. Medical Corps and all the rest of them.

So, too, with ships. It is absurd that the great ship-owners should rush up the freights against us from 24/- to 36/- in time of war. What you need is registration and a retainer in time of Peace.

So, too, with the Chaplains. Have your highly-paid staff of organisers and ask the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the Wesleyans, etc., to pick you *young* men who will work at campaign or in Aldershot as they work in the slums.

So, too, with the Militia and Volunteers. What we need in this country, for this Empire, is not *compulsion* but *Method*.

I have worked for 2 years at the W. O. and I know the solution. (1) Method and a retainer in time of Peace, presided over by a highly-paid, highly-trained staff; and (2) Expansion at a high Imperial rate of pay in time of war.

On those lines you can work in Colonial troops and get a real *landwehr* for the Empire.

But, dear Charles, all this is, IF I ever have power.

Until I have it I am loyal to the Machine—the old Machine, the rusty Machine, the un-correlated Machine.

I take, secondly, your point about despatches. To say that I agree is not enough. I have urged for months that to withhold all despatches because of the Spion Kop debate argued the petulance of children who say ‘I won’t play.’ I am a bit handicapped by the fact that brother Guy is mentioned in those despatches. But I’m not shamefaced and I think it absurd not to publish the Ladysmith Despatches. And I say so. A mention in despatches

is a statutory condition for receiving the D.S.O. or a C.B. Why should these men die before receiving their qualification? Why should the Fountain of Honour, the Crown, be bunged up because we made a hash of Spion Kop?

I won't labour these points. The Press choose to think that I am free to speak. I am not. I will not imitate Gorst in the House of Commons. *There* I am the official Mouthpiece and Representative of Lord Lansdowne. I manage to give a timbre to the 'persona.' But I will not for my own personal advantage pitch the show.

In the autumn I have been asked to speak at Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool. I have refused 20 invitations at lesser spots. In my 3 speeches I shall tell the truth and shame the devil. I shall try, hurriedly, without fear or favour, to give the fruits of 2 years in the W. O. as it is and to delineate the lines of fundamental Reform.

Whether the Press can wait for that is really a question for them and not for me.—Yours ever,

GEORGE WYNDHAM.

P.S.—My first speech—the opening of a triad—will be at Glasgow in the big Hall, about the 3rd week in October. Do come. I shall dot the i's and cross the t's with a vengeance, and I should like you to be there for old sake's sake.

P.S. 2.—The 'igh Society tack won't really wash. I never go into society. I fought in the Soudan. I have been a railway director for 10 years. I plugged at the Irish Office through all the scrimmage. I am plugging away now. You know that.

412

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,

CHESTER, August 30th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I loved your letter and the telegrams from you and Papa and Dorothy. Give them

my best love. I love you very much and wish I deserved a tenth part of what you say in your letter. But I don't!

It is with me a case of 'physician help thyself' when a long spell of work is over and the wheels run down. But I know now that I have only to wait whilst nature overhauls the machine and piles up fresh fuel. Already the tide of vitality is on the turn and the healthy appetite for work is beginning to knead my diaphragm.

I have been thinking of you, darling, during these days of Buller's operations. I have known that it was coming for five or six weeks past. But what was the use of making others feel the tension tightening up once again? Indeed the move has been postponed more than once. Still we read that the country is not suited to cavalry and may be allowed a little selfish ease in concluding that darling old Guy can't be exposed too much. I still think that the war will be practically over by September 26th. I don't know why I choose a day with such precision. But that is my estimate.

All the wires about what Lord Roberts and Buller intended to do, and are now doing, were of course withheld from publication and the Press with its usual folly went on worrying everybody with De Wet. They created a diversion from the real objective. When we have got the Railway well East of Middleburg the Boers must either retreat East on Komati Poort—in that case they will be pinned against the Portuguese Frontier—or retire to Barberton, in that case they can be surrounded in three weeks; or retire to Lydenburg and Zontpansberg; in that case they can be roped off from supplies and left until they are hungry. So that another four weeks ought to bring a solution. Meanwhile we must stick it out as we have for ten months and believe with Sibell that all is for the best.

No one was more surprised than we were to see in yesterday's Gazette that Benny has been given a Commission by Lord Roberts in the Blues. We did not ask for this so Lord Roberts must have offered it as

the earned reward of his services. I am glad that Benny accepted.

Incidentally I conclude that this will settle little Percy's determination to enter the Blues. So if all goes well with the dear we shall see him grinning under a steel helmet and pay obsequious visits to his chargers.

He has got a slight cough which worries me a great deal more than him. I had him well punched all over the other day and there is no mischief; but he has a bronchial wheeze and does not *use* the full capacity of his lungs. So I have put him on to Whiteley's exercises and Malt and Hypophosphates.

Mr. Lang is here and they work for three hours in the morning. On the 19th I take him to Eton! If only he can be kept well in the Winter and Spring it will be a great joy to have him forty minutes off from Paddington and to wallow in parental pride and anxiety!

I speak at Glasgow on October 10th, Oldham October 18th, Dover October 31st, and Bradford November 14th, I think. On October 22nd I come to you for the partridges.

All love to you all.—Your most loving son, GEORGE.

413

To his Mother

SAUGHTON,
September 13th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—I return Guy's letter sent me by Eddy. He has seen and done a good deal since he wrote it! Dear old Guy, how I long to see him. Well, Mr. Kruger has gone at last and my prophecy has still thirteen days to run.

It begins to look as if we should have a General Election. If so, the sooner the better. It will take three weeks, and then at least another three weeks before Ministers can be at their desks hammering out the policy for next year in time to frame Estimates. That is the only sound

excuse for dissolving but no one seems to have thought of it.

I am quite rested now. After shooting at Allenheads and my week at Derwent I had a grey time to go through of slackness and reaction—the 'English Malady' Dr. Johnson used to call it. I read a great deal in the garden and played Lawn Tennis in the evenings with Percy's tutor, Mr. Lang. Dobie says that Percy is much better, still he coughs a good deal. I am taking every possible precaution, underclothing, rubbing with turpentine, inhaling, malt-extract, Whiteley's exercises, and I shall myself consign him to the Matron at Eton to whom Dobie has already sent a complete account of little Perf. I am most anxious to get him into Eton. If after that he does not improve in October I have made up my mind to pack him off for six months to the South of France. He could go back to Eton for next summer half and not necessarily lose much ground in his lessons. He is very cheery and plays cricket, coming in at 5.30. They want him to have lots of air. Bendor and Lettice both went through this stage and are now as strong as horses. Constant care and prompt decision ought to pull him round as they do most things.

Love to Papa and Ditchmouse.—Ever your most loving
son,

GEORGE.

414

To his Brother

SAUGHTON,

September 14th, 1900.

DEAREST OLD GUY,—Well! so you've got rid of Mr. Kruger at last. I have seen your letter to Mamma written 7th August on the eve of your last move. I imagine that you must have had a great deal of marching and a fair amount of fighting. But I fear that by now you have had too much of that to enjoy it. We could follow your Brigade pretty well from the papers and I gather that you did the outside on the extreme left.

I now hope it may soon be over. I cheered up Minnie three weeks ago by saying the war would be practically over by September 26th.

By the time this reaches you we shall, I believe, be in the midst of a General Election. I dislike the thought of the senseless chatter. The Opposition seemed inclined simply to damn us for having what they call inferior guns and rifles. I shall be trotted out every night for three weeks, and do not relish the prospect. I have been training for it here with one of my secretaries—a run round the garden and three sets of tennis in the evening. The rest of the day is devoted to mugging up facts and ‘polishing impromptus.’

We ought to win, but I shall have to put the Government case on the first night of the election, and repeat it ‘de die in diem.’

I hope old Buller is now fairly pleased with himself. He has evidently brought you all up to time well-equipped and fed and will, I am sure, get a rare reception on his return.

Keep well, old boy. Give my love to Brock and to Ian Hamilton and Harry Rawlinson if you see them.—
Ever your most loving brother, GEORGE.

415

To Charles Boyd

35 PARK LANE, W.,
Saturday, 29.ix.00.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I shall go ‘nap’ on Monday. After the briefest exordium I shall sweep straight on to the ‘Future of Military Defence.’

How much I regret that I could not meet the Press *before* the Election. If only I could have explained the mechanical difficulties and shown how they could be surmounted and demonstrated—that until they were surmounted no paper reorganisation could effect any good! Now for myself I don’t care. But unless we get light on

these matters, *any Government* will use some phrases and then wait till the public is asleep.

There is a strong anti-military section in the electorate. Do let us combine on a practical advance. For that is the only way. What is one to do when the 'Daily Mail' and other more responsible journals first say that there is no provision for wounded soldiers and, next, when told that there is, welcome it as a tardy repentance! The pensions for *wounds* from 1/6 to 3/6 a day have been in existence since 1812.

The man whom the Mail paraded as *blind* and *destitute*, was blind, but got 3/6 a day from date of his discharge and the offer of a year gratis in an institution for teaching the Blind to read.

These are small matters. I find that to deal with them and the guns, etc., takes too much time; so also does hitting back at that amiable drifter C. B.

So on Monday at Derby I mean to skip controversy to alight on construction.

I know that if I got up and said the one thing was to make the Commander-in-Chief into the Secretary of State, and the other to 'Democratise our Army,' everyone would say 'Here is the strong man.' Instead of which I should be the weak man who knows and lies in order to agree with those who do not know.—Yours ever,

GEORGE W.

416

To his Mother

SAIGHTON GRANGE,
CHESTER, November 6th, 1900.

MOST DARLING MAMMA,—Dear Benny is very well and very frank and delightful. We had a beautiful little reception from the village last night. Horses out; school children singing 'Home sweet Home'; Parson; stud-groom; farmers and servants. All small enough and touching enough to make one gulp. I had a capital evening and talk with dear Ben last night. We took out

the five new hunters for a 'school' before breakfast this morn and managed to take three falls between us. We have just had breakfast. At 11.30 the tenants present an address here. Then we go via Eton to Chester and have an address in the Market Square, after that lunch with the Mayor and a reception in the Town Hall.—Ever your most loving son,

GEORGE.

APPENDIX A

Letter to George Wyndham from his Father on his embarking for the Soudan in his twenty-second year.

44 BELGRAVE SQUARE, S.W.,
Feb 19th 1885.

MY OWN DEAREST DEAREST BOY,—I must say once how deeply deeply I love you, I cannot express how I feel that my whole being is filled with *eager tender love for you my darling*. One cannot say this speaking but I should never forgive myself if I had not told you. I know you feel all you give up in going away, but these occasions lift one up above all the *petty* accidents of Time and Space and leave Love and Duty *standing* as they *will stand for ever*. This is what I mean when I say sometimes ‘after all nothing matters,’ the dust in front of our own door is all we are responsible for. This is a blessed thought. You know *how* I disapprove of the whole Egyptian business, so like to tell you that I send you *my own darling* away quite as willingly as for the justest and most necessary war imaginable. I like you to know that, that I don’t think *for a moment* your most *precious* life thrown away, if the worst comes, for sweet Duty’s sake. We suffer for the sins and mistakes of others, as others in turn (dreadful thought) suffer and will suffer for ours, but judiciously we are only responsible for what we do or leave undone ourselves. It is this that makes really great men like your Commander Lord Wolseley indifferent to risk of failure. I wish I could give you dear boy the best thing I have, I would part with it myself to do so, my *assurance* of the certainty of life after death, and that you *will* see your loved ones again whatever happens, and if, which God forbid, you pass from this plane I should not let it alter my life but I think of you as my dear George still, whom I shall see again. God and all good spirits keep you my *darling*. I cannot make you know what I think of you, but I feel to have

had such a son is not to have lived in vain. Dearest Mamma is writing to your friend. Any person or thing you loved we should love, much more so lovable a one as I am sure your friend is. I know she has been a help to you.—Ever your devoted Father,

PERCY WYNDHAM.

I hope you got a good tuck in at Gravesend. I am afraid you will pass the Downs at night.

APPENDIX B

See Letter No. 225, p. 334.

12.50 A.M.

Have just woken from terrible nightmare—that Mamma was dead. Yet one emotion was so beautiful in its anguish that it woke me. The dream was all of death. Others were dead. Papa had been ill and Mary dangerously ill, just through a critical bit and not out of danger. Mamma had been everywhere, nursing everybody, and was the only one apparently quite well. She had sent us back to our families and our work and I had left Sibell with her.

I came back to Sibell and she told me that Mamma was dead. I could not take it in, but at last made her tell me all about it. She, Sibell, was exactly herself, quiet and happy, and believing that death was nothing of real separation. So much so that I was wicked enough to feel that she did not feel my anguish.

It, Death, was running backward and forward through my brain in every way and every application to myself, and to us all, and to little Percy.

I thought of what her Mother's death, and uncle Edward's death, must have been to her, and that their deaths were nothing to the latest generations, to little Percy, and had been little to me though so much to Mamma.

Whilst I was groping towards the pain and mystery of death in four generations to *others* and feeling the stab of Her death to *me*, I listened, and could not cry, to Sibell quietly telling me that—she had been walking with Mamma at 10 o'clock of

the morning through the little 'coal and service' back yard to avoid the long passage entry at Clouds. Mamma had said, 'We have got so much more to do for them all that I am just going to lie down and rest my old bones.' She had gone upstairs and undressed and gone to bed; and, as Sibell's story went on, I had a vivid double existence, alone and mourning with Sibell—and with Mamma in her last moments in a room flooded with sunshine. She next said to Sibell, 'You're not to say anything to frighten anybody.' And then, 'I don't mind telling you that I am frightened, at least I am not at all frightened, but I shan't see them again.' Then she crossed her dear hands like a Crusader and lay still smiling.

Then, 'Give this message to those who can't be here,' and she began to dictate some words which became to *me* with my double existence—alone with Sibell elsewhere and by her bed in the room of sunlight—a rugged poem, full of sunlight and quiet light shadow scudding over the Downs.

The only phrase that remains now in my mind was

'With lance in rest to implicate the mail,'

but that was the one bold touch of actual conflict and Knight errantry's work. The rest was just the joy of living, and galloping and doing and, as I listened, I had a *third* existence of perception. I saw her poem. We all faded out, and I only *saw* her poem: beautiful wild animals, galloping deer, and dogs, and horses, over a Down with a ragged Wiltshire hedge in Spring leaf, bowed over and whipped by a romping wind; little clouds racing over the sky, and light shadows over the turf:—a masque of joyous life and high endeavour, rejoicing in the wind and sunlight, and a high chivalrous purpose full of happiness.

Then in my isolation and non-entity (for I was a pin's head of existence in that sunlit morning), I suddenly called out, and, as I called out, was precipitated back into my single existence, mourning alone by Sibell, with her dead and buried and gone. . . . 'Oh, darling, what a great Poet you were in being, and oh! I feel you here, and you are speaking to me still without words'; and I fell down and cried into the hem of Sibell's gown but felt happy, and that I could still communicate with her, with Lettice, and little Percy.

Suddenly there stooped down to kiss me one of the young generation, hardly knowing or understanding, but claiming that Life should go on, when I awoke with tears streaming down my cheeks.

We are all immortal, and still live and help each other without bodies or presence in the flesh.

The emotion of *seeing* her life poem, and calling out to her, and feeling her with and around me was the most sad and beautiful I have known.

APPENDIX C

Extracts from letters to his Sister Pamela Tennant that relate to her contributions to 'The Outlook,' etc.

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, 10 Jan. 1898.

With Shakespeare definitely and, for the last time, finished even to the table of contents—with my new weekly paper shaped and framed—a meeting at Leamington for Alfred Lyttelton well over on Friday—and a meeting at Edinburgh postponed till March—I am free! Freer from immediate obligations than I have been for years. So, on this sunny morning, I take up my pen and write with the birds singing outside. And I do so, chiefly, to extract a letter from you. I have sent all my news to Clouds.

I call the new paper *mine*, because it is *not* mine in any sense. Once launched, it must take its course and sink or swim. But it has been such fun in the building and launching! This involved astounding intricacies of Company Law, for I was determined to give the people who had put their money, or their brains, into the 'New Review' a good show. And I have succeeded. Of course the literary and journalistic side was more amusing. I have got a real 'business' editor in Fleet Street; but Henley, relieved from the drudgery of the editor's chair, will, I hope, write himself and, at any rate, remain an influence.

How I wish you would write something, anything! One must begin on something. After scribbling my verses—you

have done this—and it is the best way to learn the vocabulary and rhythm of our tongue, and writing controversial letters about Ireland, I have, if you come to think of it, just written on subjects that were thrown at my head—Plutarch, Shakespeare. But, though I can't write well, I have at last learnt to write, as Mamma learnt to paint. That is to say if anybody wired me for a column of 1500 words, or an article of 4000 words on the 'Man in the Moon,' I could now sit down and write the column, or the article, without spending a day or a week of helpless misery. Now you can't think how pleasant it is to find you have a new 'faculty,' however imperfect, instead of a 'talent,' however promising. Writing used to be torture to me, and now it isn't! That is why I do want you to turn a talent, far greater than mine, into a faculty. 'Faculty' only means 'Facility' and, though it sounds dull to say so, it can only be acquired by practice. A man may be a good natural shot, rider, speaker, painter, writer. But he cannot count on shooting, riding, speaking, painting, writing, fairly well on any day at a moment's notice, unless he practises.

This long exordium leads me up to suggesting two subjects—one I have mentioned before—on either of which you might well begin.

If you turn to the XIXth Century for this month, January, you will find that Yeats in '*The Prisoners of the Gods*,' does for Irish Faëry lore just what you could do for Wiltshire and just in the simple way which I have suggested to you. Invent new names for your people and places and then reproduce their words exactly, setting them in the literary equivalent for the conditions of time and place in which you heard them and of the sensation which they aroused in you.

The other subject arises, in part from your having once said that you thought of painting Mamma in words, and in part from the amount of picturesque material which keeps cropping up about our Grandmamma. I should try Grandmamma first if I were you. Just consider how pleased the world was with Hare's rather dull and pretentious book about Lady Waterford and another lady. Remember that articles are even now written about 'The Two Ladies of Llangothlen.' Reflect on the articles which people write about their houses, e.g. Lady Pembroke on Wilton in the Pall Mall Magazine. I only instance these to show that even poor things are appreciated.

But if I were you and about to paint Grandmamma in Prose, I should try to give her a background. And what materials there are for a picturesque and atmospheric background! The thing is crying out to be done.

The little bits of 'colour' which I had in my mind are (1) the short record which you sent me for my birthday, (2) the 'Berceuses' which have come out as a Christmas-card pamphlet in Grandmamma's handwriting, (3) some lines which Henley has just hit upon in Bowles. They *must* have been addressed to her:—

‘On *Miss Fitzgerald* and Lord Kerry Planting Two Cedars
in the Churchyard, Bremhill.

Yes, *Pamela*, this infant tree,
Planted in sacred earth by thee,
Shall strike its earth (root?), and pleasant grow
Whilst I am mouldering below—etc.’

You will find the passage in Gilfillan's 'Bowles,' Vol. II., pp. 289-90.

Now these three things give you all the indications that you need.

(1) Gives you Lord Edward and the Rebellion, the last of the Ancien Régime at Paris, the new ideas of liberty and romantic revival, etc., etc.

(2) The Berceuses gives you her love and her mother's love for the old rural France persisting in perishing Paris, and, with your own love of old French songs, you could make *that* atmospheric and lyrical as an Autumn evening.

(3) Gives you the beginning of the Century:—Byron attacks Bowles in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' Thus to the kind of Liberalism which made Grandmamma such a stickler against Slavery, etc., etc.

Now a tiny book, or appreciation, on these lines with engravings of the pictures of Lord Edward, and of his Pamela, of her and Grandmamma, and of Grandmamma alone, would be a delicious thing. Besides, in her stories—the 'Story of an Apple,' and 'The Cabin by the Wayside'—you would be sure to find something, and you could draw parallels and talk about Miss Edgeworth and Jane Austen and, generally, recapture the perfume of 'Tis sixty years since.'

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, 19 Jan. 1898.

I am too tired to answer your letter properly to-night—it is striking 12—but I won't let another day pass without an 'acknowledgment.' I write straight off because I can answer certain points by facts of experience, and these are better than all the theories in the world. Now fact one is, that your two difficulties—(1) can't start, (2) mind starts like the 5 fingers of hand spread out, were my difficulties. Are still, though something disciplined. Instead of erecting telegraph poles, I insinuated into the parent soil the fibres of the roots of the trees of which the poles ought to have been made. That is because the curious, imaginative mind confounds two quite separate questions:—learning and teaching. In learning, which we do automatically even in our dreams, you cannot diverge too far aside, or burrow too deep, or overthrow too many boundaries of traditional classification. But, when it comes to teaching, which is writing prose, you select the best trees of all those that are obviously good trees. You saw off their roots and lop off their branches and stick them up where any fool may see them. If you sit down to write a sketch of, say, Grandmamma, or the philosophy of dress, or the permanence of magic, you are not bound to give all your guesses at the inscrutable and incomprehensible whole of experience. Indeed, you are bound to do just the reverse. You have got to get up, one by one, and one after the other, a series of propositions each of which shall be as 'plain as a pikestaff.' In doing this you do not dissemble the truth that each pikestaff was made out of a branch, each branch sawn from a tree, each tree rooted in the soil, each root fringed with fibres, each fibre sucking its nourishment from chemical products, produced by aeons of events in the geology of the world. That truth is admitted; without appreciation by the ass, with appreciation by the intelligent. The paradox and miracle of talent or genius comes in when the person, who sees best how complex, diverse, and eternal, is even the fall of a leaf, most sternly seizes on the salient and significant in things as they are, here and now, to us all, and says it with the sharpest effect. By this he kills two birds at one stone. His meaning is intelligible to the many, and suggestive to the few. For the very art which

enables him to cut his piece of 'choses vues' clearly out of the phantasmagoria of experience is just that which, paradoxically, makes his effect suggestive to the 'illuminati.'

Now, my dear, when you have seen more, felt more and thought more than others, you have *always* too much to say. But anything which you *do* say is sure to be interesting. The point is to make it intelligible. To do that you must select. That is, you must reject and reject and reject. It does not matter what you write about. Choose a subject: toss up for one. If you write about it you will find that you express not it only, but yourself. And yourself, all the more clearly, the closer you stick to the essential points in your subject. This is a mystery and a miracle. But it is so. Think of great painters! Don't their pictures *stink* of their style?

Therefore you do not need to read much. Take my suggestion of a sketch of Grandmamma, for example. I will be bound that you need not refresh your memory. But you may skim, if you like, Moore's *Life of Lord Edward*, Carlyle's *French Revolution*, Henley's Vol. I. of *Byron*—the notes—and, as you go on, you will find references to follow up—many more than you need.

Then, when it comes to writing, jump right in. Write down anything and everything. Have it typewritten and *then*, the fun begins! Your first sketch ought to be chaotic and unfinished, like a picture or a bust after the first sitting. If you try to *finish* at first, you will be forced, infallibly, to begin all over again.

Now I wrote to Henley about you and this is what he says:—'If she be all you say she is, then not to try (at least) to write, is criminal. I am sure the method of coercion—mine—is the right one: chuck her into the water, and let her sink or swim; or rather, let her learn to swim largely from the fear of sinking. As for the theme, I can think of nothing so promising, of nothing more alluring, than *Pamela II.*'—that is, of course, Grandmamma. *Pamela*, Lord Edward's wife, was *Pamela I.*, and you are *Pamela III.*—'That is the sort of adventure that should make the dullest of us thrill.'

No book can tell you more than you can divine about Lord Edward and his *Pamela*. Lord Edward, a Geraldine, is young and romantic at a time when the XVIIIth century is old and sartorial: An affair of powder and breeches and stars and

garters : An age in which the men who command armies and govern empires are, as Carlyle says, 'contemporary eaters': saved only by cynical wit. If anything so like perdition merits the saving clause. Lord North losing America—in a blue coat and star—says he only wished the enemy trembled at the names of our Generals as much as he did. But to Lord Edward America is liberty. Nobody knows now, or ever will know, what they all meant by that. But they felt a great deal. And Rousseau's Natural Right of Man, though absurd as a basis for political philosophy, was good as a protest against the 'wiggeries and butteries' of the age. So Lord Edward goes and fights in America, marries the adopted daughter of Madame de Genlis, putative child of Philippe Égalité, organises the Irish Rebellion, disguises himself as a postboy, is betrayed, captured and dies in prison of his wounds. His child, Pamela II., who has heard the high-falutin of liberty and seen the 'low life above stairs' of Napoleon's Empire, is (as you say) smuggled in a cheese-ship back to Ireland and England. Of the Duke of Richmond, wishing to marry her mother, and friends of the family interposing to prevent it. You must get hold of what England was then—very fine, but fine as the defenders of a last trench are fine :—terribly brutalised and stable-jacketed. So that she is of a double extraction. The solemn, respectable, stone house with comforts of the Tory oligarchy : Napoleon an ogre : education a snare, etc., etc., coming as a new, cold cage which, with its little prisoner holds, too, the ghosts of a child's half-understood romantic memories of quite another world of culture and liberality and modernity gone mad.

But, Pamèlo, I must not run on. Read the history of the Irish Rebellion, and a few French *mémoires*, and any account of Lord Eldon and the six Acts, and then trust to your instinct.

20 Jan. 1898.

I opened this again to-day to see what I had said, for I was very sleepy last night. As to the 'Slaves.' I know that Aunt Emily's strong view about black men is derived from her mother. The hints I have thrown out would be, of course, only for a first chapter. You would get on to their life at Athlone and to Dublin under Lord Carlisle. The daughters

all marrying soldiers back from the Crimea—the first war after the long, 40 years' peace.

Whilst you are reading for this and turning it over in your mind, why not sit down, on some propitious morning, and review Mrs. Ewing's poetry? You should bring in her husband's translation of Hoffmann, with particular reference to Uncle Drosslemeyer and the nutcracker. Swift wrote for fun in long prose lines with a bump of rhyme at the end of each. So did the Arabs, in earnest, before Mahomet:—see Chinnery's introduction to *Al Hariri*. You may be as personal and intimate as you please in such a review. Begin, as in your letter:—'When I ask my friends whether they admire Mrs. Ewing's work, they say "Oh yes, Jackanapes."'

A sketch of that kind cannot be too short. For brevity glance at Henley's *Views and Reviews*. For the personal note glance at Max Beerbohm on *photographs* of Oxford Clubs, in the *Saturday Review* of a fortnight or three weeks ago. Of course you must not imitate Henley, and Heaven forbid that you should imitate Beerbohm. But they will show you, as indeed does Swift, how direct and easy it is permissible, indeed laudable, to be.

As to 'starting.' I always remind myself of Dr. Johnson's advice:—'Any man can write if he will set himself doggedly to do it;' of Thackeray's encouragement:—'If you have nothing to say on a subject, take a pen between your fingers, and you will begin to write'—or words to that effect; and, as a set off to the Doctor, of Cashell Byron's famous lecture on ease in attack. The same truth obtains in speaking. Mount the platform and advance to the footlights and—there you are! A beginner always strives to anticipate by imaginative effort the exaltation and precision which the brute circumstances of writing or speaking never fail to give, when the time comes, mechanically. It is only the nervous and unpractised rider who picks his line and jumps the brook in imagination *before* the hounds find. The man who can ride sits at ease on his horse, and starts him at full gallop, knowing that with the movement the old facility will return so that, without any effort of the will, he finds himself after five minutes turning his horse on a sixpence and dropping him neatly in and out of a road.

Now suppose that you, or I, are asked to write a short

appreciation of Mrs. Ewing. What do we do? We reflect that everybody knows Jackanapes and the Short Life. So nothing need be said of them beyond a cursory reference to that very fact and, perhaps, to Ruskin's imprimatur on the first. We want people to read her poems and letters. You want to say—(I take all this from your letter) that her humour is akin to Hood's—here you must, as ever, remember the ass and fence him off from Hood's bad puns, comparing these to Lowell's to Mrs. Ewing's advantage: that her pathos is akin to H. Andersen's—but never sickly: that her sense of rhythm reminds you of Blake: above all, that she was a great dear and very brave, and that she thoroughly remembered being a child.

Suppose, then, that you want to say this, or something else of the same kind. That is quite enough material, for some of it will develop as you write.

Very well. You mean to write 1000 words, or 1500 words. You take some nice, clean, quarto paper—I can't write on foolscap—you remember that we all write about 10 words to the line quarto. If you write 9 or 11, you can test this by counting the words in five or six lines, and taking the average. On a page you write 22 lines=220 words to the page. So 1000 words is four and $\frac{1}{2}$ pages. Make up your mind that you are going to write five pages. You will tighten up the difference of 120 words when you correct.

All that remains to do is to blaze away! If a sentence or transition won't come, leave it. When you have done you will easily alter and finish it to suit its position. Have the whole typewritten. Wait a day, or two days. Then read it, pretending that some one has sent it to you: and hack away!

The signs for the printer are soon learnt and, believe me, it is better to learn them than to mess about in a fashion of your own devising. They are traditional and may have been used by the writers of the Renaissance.

35 PARK LANE, W.,
11 Feb. 1898.

I am so glad—DELIGHTED—that you have found the incentive and are ready to Plunge! Fame may be 'a pearl that lies beneath a sea of tears'; but a *faculty* for writing is a pearl of contentment, to be picked up from the floor with but a little initial, and temporary, irritation; comparable to that which

springs from stooping to button your boot. That, and no more. And many avoid even that.

Herbert Stephen told me that the first thing he ever wrote in his life was an article for the *St. James'*. He called on Greenwood—then the editor—and humbly asked to be allowed to write on the subject he had in his mind. He expected a refusal or, if a consent, a period of some days for gestation. But Greenwood said 'Very well, young man, sit down. You've got just 1½ hours before we pass for press.' So he sat down; a little flustered at having his sheets taken from him as fast as each was covered, and by the thumping of the press devouring and printing in the next room. But in ten minutes he was happy and has never been bothered by a moment's diffidence or difficulty from that day to this.

I told the editor that you would contribute regularly and he is delighted. Of course I shall tell no one else.

If I were you I should fire away at once:—supposing you have not already got an article done.

Everybody writes, as everybody paints, in his own way: should do so in all respects, must do so in many. But in one respect any one who writes for a paper is helped, *not hindered*, by having the size of his 'canvas' given to him. The size of yours is 1200 words: no more and no less. But you need not count them. A line of print is 9 words. If you write more to the line, a simple rule of three sum, done once and for all, will tell you how many of your lines equal how many fewer of print.

My two difficulties at first were (1) the attempt to deal with a whole subject and all its ramifications on one 'canvas,' however small; (2) the attempt to effect perfect transitions between the parts. The first is preposterous; the second unnecessary and vicious. For it gives a glazed surface to your work comparable to Leighton's manner in painting when at his worst and glove-boxiest. In 1200 words you can't possibly handle more than 5, you may well content yourself with 3, ideas, or effects. And you need no transitions, for all your ideas or effects will cohere sufficiently owing to the singleness of your own bent and the consistency of your own attitude towards life at the moment of writing.

It is, however, true for most of us, especially at first, that our work gains by cutting down and transposing. So that, if you write 10 lines, that is 90 words, too many, your article will

gain by cutting out 10 lines in all, from here and from there, when it is finished.

In an article you want to produce an effect, not to prove a case; to *express yourself*, not to convince other people. So it does not matter very much where you begin. Your mind is stored with things which have struck you for their beauty, pathos or humour. Choose from 3 to 5 at random and begin.

I did 'get over the stile' but only by putting in an incompetent hack. And my need of your pen is imperative.

I do not gather whether you have seen the first number. Mind you do, for I want to know what you think of it.

35 PARK LANE, W.,
17 Feb. 1898.

It is fun! But you must not become such a 'pro' as to have 'professional nightmare'! I can't tell you how delighted I am at the spirit with which you have thrown yourself into the enterprise, nor how certain I am that it will add to the colour and content of your life. I am here for a few minutes: just back from Dover, taking the 'Outlook' office and editor on way, and just off to Saighton.

I went to Dover to read a lecture on Elizabethan Adventurers in Elizabethan Literature. I believe you will like it, if you ever hear it. I shall keep it by me, and read it when bullied into delivering addresses to provincial audiences. Also I made 6 or 7 speeches, opening schools, annual meetings of Clubs, young men's Institutes, etc., etc., and all went off like a bouquet of rockets.

But all the time I was only thinking of 'Clarissa.' And now for her affairs. I wired the address because in one letter you asked for it. But, when at 109 Fleet Street on Wed. morning, Hurd gave me *Photography* and *Parrot* to read, as he had the other two in type. And, my dear, I have already, just now, read *Village Notes* in an advance copy, signed 'Clarissa.' You are in good company! Henley and the very last of Robert Louis Stevenson. So now you are one of the late Victorian School. Hurd, the editor, likes your work: prefers *Puppy* to *Village Notes*. I give all opinions as all help—but to-day, spoke highly of *Village Notes*. I want to give you the exact situation. *Notes* are in this week and will burst upon the B.P. (British Public) to-morrow. *Puppy* next week, for a change.

At Dover I studied *Photography* very carefully and wrote you a long letter of criticism and suggestion, even as Henley used to write to me three years ago. I mentioned to Hurd that I had done this. He was rather troubled and said 'for Heaven's sake don't discourage her.' So I am in two minds about sending my letter. But I think I shall send it; as I know that I liked to get 'tips' and to have my work taken to pieces, and I know that you have enough independence and personality to take my criticism with many grains of salt and not to be discouraged—why should you be? As Henley once wrote to me, 'Do you suppose I should have taken the trouble to criticise your work if I had not known it was worth it, and known that you would be chiefly and first and lastly yourself?' That brings me to the second stipulation upon which alone will I send you that letter. It is that you clearly understand, in the second place, that my way of writing is my way and not yours: And not better than yours. But that some of the things which I do, or avoid, in *my* way, you have got to do, and avoid, in *your* way.

If after this explanation you want the letter—wire me to Saughton to-morrow.

What I have done is, not to touch your 'copy,' but to write the same thing, precisely in *your words*, only transposing, punctuating, tightening up and emphasizing. To this I have added a long letter, taking, seriatim, the three or four things which you can do better. Now, if you wire, I shall send the three documents. (a) your MS., (b) my paraphrase, (c) my criticism. Then you are to (a) stick to your own, or (b) use my paraphrase, this time; it is only a paraphrase, a mere rearrangement of your 'parts' into what, I consider, rightly or wrongly, a better 'proportioned whole.' Or (c) write out your own again incorporating anything which you approve of in my paraphrase.

Anyhow this is good practice for us both. Writing is an Art, like music or painting. But the chief thing is to write, as you do, freely and without fear. That is number one, number two, 3, 4, 5, 6, and so on to about number 90. There remains 90-100, a poor 10 per cent. of the game which does consist in going over one's first draft and tightening it up with a regard to proportion and high lights on the main points.

But I won't send it unless you swear that you will not take it as a censure, but only as an illustration, naturally in my own manner, of certain points to which you should, in going over your first drafts, pay attention, naturally, in your manner.

I should never forgive myself if I made your confidence less by a shred than what it is. 'Sticky' writers never do anything. 'The Flowing Pen' is the secret of success. Only, to make that success triumphant, it is well, after the picture has dried, not before, to go at it again. We all do this.

104 MOUNT STREET, 2 March 1898,
1.15 A.M. Friday morn.

Am just back from the House and have read your two letters. I am very glad you have rewritten *Photography*. That is the way. Mine was written to show what had to be done and was written, of course, in my way. What you had to do was to get the equivalent in your way.

That paraphrase was not written as a substitute, but only as an example of some of the difficulties of composition and of some of ways in which they may be engineered.

The point of my last letter about the 'machine' and 'Army' was quite different. It dealt not with the addition of illustration or the re-modelling of structure, but only with *verbal* corrections. What I meant, and mean, is that certain things are, as a matter of course, edited by every editor in the kingdom in the work of every contributor. I need not insist on that. Many words are spelt in two ways, but in any one paper, in one way. 'Split Infinitives,' sentences beginning vaguely 'It is' and then tumbling on to the noun substantive, are just straightened by cutting out 'It is' and putting the noun substantive at the start. That is done to everybody, because everybody who sends in copy, even Henley, leaves these blemishes. When the proof can go back, it goes back with these things underlined and a dash in the margin to draw the author's attention to them. When it cannot, the editor just does them and shoots the copy in. Because, after all, he is responsible and must bring out his paper at a certain hour on Friday afternoon. That is the 'machine,' and the toleration of it is the 'army.'

But there is no need to labour that. Your stuff is excellent.

They laughed at my draft, but there was nothing in my draft to laugh at that was not yours. If you could only have seen, as I saw, the way in which Henley cut about Ernest Williams' first chapters of 'Made in Germany'! Well, it made his fame, and by the time he reached chapter four, he could write by himself.

I must repeat one thing to you, though Hurd said I must not spoil any of the contributors! At our Directors' lunch on Wed.—we lunch together every Wed. to shape the issue for Friday—two who haven't an idea of Clarissa's identity picked out *The Puppy* as *the* thing in the number. One said 'it's COLOSSAL,' and that one is Heinemann's partner and the partner who selects the books which they publish. Now Heinemann is the go-ahead publisher of the day, thanks to that partner. So, when Clarissa has written her score of essays, she will take them to Messrs. Heinemann & Co. and come out with the success of next Autumn's publishing season.

But study style. Now style really amounts to no more than being quite sure of what you mean and saying it *exactly*: that is, with 'completeness and clarity of expression.' For example, the only sentence that had to be verbally edited in *Village Notes II.* was the one just after the *Torch*. As it stood it was not clear or complete. I didn't want to alter it, knowing your view, and was for leaving it out. Hurd liked the 'bald glare and jagged shadows' so much—and so did I—that we kept that and just hiked it up into the one before. I want you to see that that is just what you will do yourself next week; and to believe that when an accident, as of your being at Stockton, precludes the editor from referring back to the writer, he always does that to everybody's copy. Otherwise we should never get through our work.

One other tip. Besides completeness, clarity, grammar, rhythm and the rest of it, one has to avoid jangling suggestions of rhyme. In one sentence you had 'alone' and soon after 'known'—'hearts I had known.' I put, as you would have put had you noticed the jangle—'come to know.' That, again, is a mere verbal correction which every editor would make in the copy of every contributor.

The great chance of journalism is, as I know to my profit, that these verbal shifts which neither add to nor detract from

one's meaning, nor even one's phrasing, teach one to look out for these microscopic lapses of ear.

But, my dear, in three weeks you will be able to correct my proofs. Remember that we all ask our friends to read and pencil our proofs. I read and pencil Henley's! Because the person who writes is so possessed by his or her meaning, that he or she does not, and cannot, notice these mechanical errors which are of no greater importance than a casual misspelling, or chance omission of a word.

Please send your copy at once straight to Hurd, 109 Fleet Street, this week, as I am off to-morrow to prepare a speech for Edinburgh on Wed. Either *Photography* or *Grass Parrot*.

Grass Parrot does very well as it stands. Either will do admirably. I have told Hurd on no account to print my *Photography*.

So I go babbling on! Although really there is no need to say a word more. Your redraft of *Village Notes II.* shows that you have got the hang of the thing. Henley divides new writers into those who will learn and those who won't learn. You are one of those who will. Therefore in a week or two you will write as well as Kelly or Williams, who couldn't write at all till they were shown how, and now write without a slip.

A 'Split Infinitive' means writing 'to greatly dare' or 'to idly imagine' instead of 'to dare greatly' or 'to imagine idly.' I can't think why people do this, but they will do it. They do it in the 'Outlook' to such an extent that a clever man in Paris wrote to ask me whether we gave prizes for split infinitives.

I think 'learning' is delightful, and Henley's division is a very true one in much else besides the writing of English prose.

SAIGHTON, 5th March 1898.

I am writing merely out of dissipation. I have written all I know of prose and, if you are ever in doubt and care to consult this oracle, you have my letters. In fact, I have written more than I know of English prose. That leads me, by a frantic transition, to one of the many sentences in Newman's writings which I hold priceless. After writing a life of, say, 'St. Bridget,' he ended 'That is all and, indeed, *more than all* that is known to men of the acts and words of the blessed St. Bridget. But it is not a tenth part of what is known to the Angels in Heaven.'

Isn't that delicious? Well, the ordinary journalist always spoils it by giving it to Froude, a cynical unbeliever. The whole fun, of course, is that an out and out believer was frank and human enough to write 'more than all' and then to give that gigantic 'counter'—'But it is not a tenth part of what is known to the Angels in Heaven.'

I have read *Village Notes II.* four times in print. First, after hunting and before dinner, when I thought it excellent, though I starved. Then aloud to Lettice, who exulted. Then twice to self, who 'chortled in his joy.' Of course there is a d—ble misprint in the *Torch* sentence. But there it is. We have not yet perfected the 'machine.' But do not you mind. I read the 'Outlook' with the acerbated eye of the 'only begetter' who is to be hung if it fails: you read your essays with the ex-acerbated eye of the author. But the British public read without perceiving all the excellence or any of the defects.

Read Henley's 'Dickens,' but don't be influenced by it. This, however, you should remark, that, while he uses every trick and freak of the personal and familiar, every dodge and quirk of construction and punctuation, the whole screed is severely grammatical. Stick a pin in anywhere and you can find the subject, verb and the rest of it. Now compare that with an article in the XIXth Century on the 'Short Story' by one Wedmore. There you see the same accidented appearance of typography, but in every other sentence you get bogged.

I cannot tell you how many strides you have taken in *Vill. II.* as contrasted with your first draft of *Photography*. The structure sings out and, the more clearly, because there are no glosses on anatomy. The bones hang together and each is clothed with flesh and skin. Whereas in the first draft, and in the first draft of *Photography*, you were annotating the skeleton and, between-whiles, chucking on dollops of flesh.

Style gives charm, surprise and colour, but its greatest gift is brevity. Some praise the style of an ordinary leading article: 'A good editorial,' as an American once called the ideal of his pen. But if he were to write things worth writing in a 'good editorial' the world itself would not suffice to contain the books that should be written. All the masters of style have found the dodge of saying exactly what they mean

in the fewest words. That is why it is said of Montaigne that 'If you prick his sentences, they bleed.' That is why, of others, we say that their style reminds us of balls of worsted.

This business of saying just what you mean is a hard one. People who are congenitally illiterate—I will not name them—reproach Stevenson and others for archaisms. They imagine that Stevenson and Henley use turns of the XVIIth century out of an affectation for the ancient. But it is not so. They use them because the modern journalese won't mean anything in particular; when you consider it. Therefore they are driven back upon an age in which writing, being newer, was handled more strenuously so that it might truly convey the thought of the writer. But the journalist fails of even his attempt to rob words and sentences of their shape and colour. If you fail to impose upon your language the very colour and contour of your thought, it will suggest the contour and colour of some other thought, not yours. The poor hack who spends his life in trying to make words mean 'nothing in particular,' in the fond hope that thus they will convey his thought 'generally,' finds that they fail to convey his thought generally and that they do convey either nothing, or else somebody else's thought. Of course there are some things that are worth saying just because they are 'mystic, wonderful.' But there is all the difference in the world between painting a fog that is beautiful and trying to paint a clear-cut steeple by looking at it through blurred glasses.

I am here of set purpose. Next Wed: I have to speak on South Africa to 3000 people, so I slipped away last night and hunted to-day to cleanse my blood. To-morrow I shall go to church to make my mind serene. On Monday and Tuesday I shall descend into Hell, that is to say I shall prepare my speech. On Wed: I shall deliver it, and so back to London to attend in the House and preside over the 'Outlook.' I have found that one must break up one's life into sections whenever there is a clear bugle call, sounding imperatively for a definite attack. And before such attacks one must behave as soldiers behave—get body and soul into fettle and serenity.

More by token I had a fair day's sport and revelled in the March sun and mists and winds, in the hounds' cry, and in the animated arch of my horse over the fences.

I have so much of business letter-writing to do—often 30 letters in a day—that I never write to my friends. But I like prattling on paper to you. So good-night.

104F MOUNT STREET, W.,
13th May 1898.

I have only time to write that I have not time to answer your two dear letters.

Hurd and I approve 'When the Stars Fell' series, but it wants '*working out.*' One says to oneself: 'Here have I some curious tints on my palette.' Then one asks 'What am I going to paint?' And, when your tints are cobwebby and mysterious the intention of your picture cannot be too clear. It is obvious from any Whistler that he meant to chronicle the atmosphere over a river by night. In literature you have to be more definite even than that. Now there is a something in the world. I call it the 'Wood-Spirit.' Wordsworth called it 'The impulse from a vernal wood.' La Motte-Fouqué called it 'Undine'; the Greeks called it 'Pan'; the savage who makes a rock sacred calls it nothing but feels it most. Lord Lytton wrote of it: 'There is a cherry tree and the rain is falling'—only in rhyme which I forget—and went on 'if I could have grasped that for a moment longer, I should have guessed the riddle of the earth.'

Very well, then, Pamèlo has got to 'do' the same emotion in a different and her own way. But to be natural to others you must be artificial yourself. How are you going to set to work?

You might make it personal. As thus: 'I had been reading to my children'—then quote—I forget it—the nursery story about 'Henny-Penny' and the heavens falling. Work in 'catching larks when the heavens fall.' Muse on the catastrophe and quote, as of a friend you know, R. L. Stevenson's saying: 'If the heavens fell I should find him the next day on a ladder repairing the catastrophe.' Then muse again, would it be a catastrophe? Then walk out and watch the falling stars. Then reflect that they are part of *our* world as intimate as the world was to the Middle Ages—a Punch and Judy show, with Heaven above and Hell beneath. Then Victor Hugo feeling the stars were enacting a sombre and

fantastic illumination for him alone. Then feel that the world is going to tell its secret to you. Then give a shiver and go in to bed. Then glide into your dreams. THEN weave your cobwebs. Then awake, between the wall and the paper, a woman amongst women and men, and an Undine, a Pan, a star, a rock with a quaint shadow into the bargain.

That is how I should set to work.

SAUGHTON,
CHESTER, 26 Aug. 1898.

Suddenly there shoots up in my mind—bent on other things—the plain fact that I have made an ass of myself over your line :

‘ God speaks in thunders *AND* in murmurings.’

Of course it is a contrast. I quite hear it and feel it now, like an organ-stop that begins to cipher. But I didn’t guess it this morning. For all that it is not obvious enough coming, as it does, in a steep metaphysical passage. It is plain when you see it. Yet the question remains will any one see it at the first grapple with a new and imaginative idea ?

Taking the passage as I now, perfectly, understand it, the main sense is that God speaks in our own longings, aspirations, regrets, hopes. These, no doubt, are ‘murmurings.’ So, for contrast, you may recall that God speaks in ‘thunder,’ too. But the real, first point is that He speaks in *OUR* emotions. These are comparatively silent, but their comparative silence is an accident : that they are ‘ours’ and interior is of essence. To take the accident of their softness and heighten that by contrast with thunder, blurs the essence and starts a new hare, viz.:—does God ‘speak in thunders’? Again, supposing that He does, is it helpful to recall the fact when you are emphasizing its opposite? You need a strait addition to the sense there, not a clipped contrast. So that ‘God speaks in tremors of our own heart’s fear,’ or ‘God speaks in whispers or shudders of our own heart’s fear,’ would help the show more.

Darling, it amuses me to win, tie, or wrangle as if I was talking to you. And I hope it does not tease you. I own up frankly to having been dull in missing your point, but, for the purposes of conversation, I stick to it that your point just diverts the reader’s aim from the target. And the reader, unused to shooting at the novel, will clutch on to the obvious

'thunder,' and bundle up the 'murmurings' with it, and have a hazy recollection of 'the still small voice.' This will remind him of 'ravens' and the 'widow's cruse.' Coming back from a rapid excursus of the mind along the beaten tracks of 'First Lessons,' he will find himself once more confronted with your perfectly novel idea of a subjective Heaven and God. This will annoy him horribly, just when you wish to coax him out of his groove.

The same kind of accident overtakes the platform speaker. Just when you are making a new point you drop the name 'Lord Salisbury.' Everybody cheers and farewell to your new point.

SAIGHTON GRANGE, CHESTER,
St. George's Day, 1899.

The *Photograph* has not, as yet, turned up. I know I shall love it.

I like the *Dream*; and like it better than the explanation. It never quite does to explain an allegory. Do you remember dear B. J.'s favourite among the 'Gesta Romanorum'? These were good stories of *all* kinds told by monks, to amuse, and chaperoned, to edify, by a moral which explained, as in *Æsop*. The one dear and reverend B. J. like best was 'The Story of Three Friends.' The moral begins: 'The 3 Friends are 3 Enemies.' Why go on?

I love your imagination. Sometimes I think of it as of a horse turned out to grass: so happy and irresponsible and quaint. But I suppose you ought to go out with a bushel of corn and catch it sometimes—a long and weary job. And then harness it into a shay.

Read a novel by Mrs. WILFRID Ward, called 'One Poor Scruple,' and tell me what you think of it. I think it was worth doing and well done. She is a niece of Lord Edmund Talbot and wife of my friend Wilfrid W. who wrote 'Life of Cardinal Wiseman' and 'Witnesses to the Unseen,' etc., etc. It will remind you a little of other books—that is inevitable in a first work—but, even so, I think her Cecilia truer than Benson's Dodo or than the girl in 'Illumination.' There are one or two blots that could so easily be erased. However! . . .

There is a stern review in this week's 'Outlook'—'A Matter of Form'—which is worth reading.

Yesterday I was really better for the first time and am still, but weather too bad to go out. Still, yesterday I felt for the first time that I should be myself again. I am dying for work. It chafes me to think how much there is to do and how few people know how to begin. I suppose this is what a housemaid feels when she enters a bachelor's study.

I have been reading some Politics and History. After all, it is consoling to remember the utter smash to which this country has gone in times past. Whenever I am low about politics, I think of the fall of Constantinople:—the Emperor dead under a pyramid of the whole nobility and all arts and letters wiped out. “So am not I,” quoth the foolish scullion.’

HALKYN,
N. WALES, 30 April 1899.

‘To have the great poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame.’

But I promise you even fame if you persist as in *April Weather*. In the Temple of Fame—think of it!—a bust on a bracket, for sure; a niche—why not?—a pedestal? . . . but that is only given in exchange for terrible sacrifices. Don't bother for that, but do bother to earn your niche.

April Weather is full of admirable effects. Whether other people now living can do this kind of work, I do not know. It is sufficient that they don't do it. When they pretend to do it, they positively succeed in making birds and flowers and cloud-shadows vulgar: in its way a remarkable achievement, with this much of great Art in it, that it is ‘unexpected.’

I won't trouble to add up all the good things in *April Weather*; they made me laugh the heart's laugh; for themselves, and because they mean that you will get your bracket and that you can get your niche. The beauty of the Flower-names, the truth and fun of the starlings and rooks; the clean-cut colour-print of the children in the wind, the sense of atmosphere, the realisation of movement in the weather, the exhilaration conjured up by the joy of the right word and the managed phrase coming to meet and bear the right thought and inevitable image: all these effects are in your *April Weather*.

And now, after the manner of the beast, I will say just where

I would like a few very small alterations. In the second line—‘A very *pot-pourri* of weather.’ That might be worth saying at tea, but is not worth writing. Anybody could write that. ‘Pot-pourri’ was a stupid French phrase, one of their frank sayings that express so little—Pot-rot. It never would have occurred to an Englishman to call a mixture of rose-leaves, lavender and spices pot-rot. The word, then, starts badly. It goes on worse. Because the particular mixture, thus unfortunately designated, is a mixture; idiots have thought it pleasing to call *any* mixture a pot-pourri when they seek to enforce the idea of incongruity. Diligence could not find a word less fitted for that task. The fact of mixture has become quite secondary in the associations of ‘pot-pourri.’ We think, when we hear the word, of the faded scent, of tall jars, of tapestried walls, of large rooms built in the days of Louis XIV. and now scarce inhabited. The word had triumphed over its unfortunate invention, and in the hands of a master could be used for fine and sentimental effects. But your ‘Strand Magazine’ fellow won’t allow the poor word this belated success in letters. No. He thinks it smart, when he wishes to convey the mere idea of incongruity, to put the pedal down like a school-boy playing the piano. So when his predecessors would have written ‘patchwork’ or ‘pot-pourri,’ he, probably, writes ‘macedoine,’ having once been asked to a ball.

Supposing he had an idea—the case is remote—which deserved enforcing, he couldn’t do it. But you can do it; you *do* do it, and in the same sentence, ‘and one marvels to see a day being three days at once, and all so successfully.’ Admirable! perfect. And ‘perfect’ means ‘accomplished,’ ‘finished.’ Consequently any addition before or after mars by excess. To put ‘pot-pourri’ before that excellent phrase is to stick a pellet of bread on the tip of a finely chiselled nose.

In the 3rd par. I find the only sentence which falls *far* below the level of the whole:—‘There is something better in these early days of promise and elation of Nature’s every mood, even than in those that are to follow on when the full pageant of the year will have begun.’ Frankly, that is an ‘ill phrase.’ It has little structure of thought and *none* of sound. The use of many monosyllables is exquisite when they are strung on a strong wire of rhythm. Even in poetry:—‘too full for sound or foam

When that which drew from out,' etc. is wonderful. But try your row over :—' than in those that are to (follow) on when the full (pageant) of the year will have.' It is like 'Reading without Tears.' But the sense is weak, too, and 'pageant' has been worked to death. Anyway it should mean the gorgeous succession and not be used, as here, antithetically to 'promise' and beginnings. There is one good idea and excellent word for it—'Elation.' Get the beat on to that. Mind you, the idea of the 'early days' and 'promise' being the best is worn; almost worn out. And to obtrude such a reflexion into a work of Art which proves its truth triumphantly in new joys is to my mind a fault of Art. All the true thoughts are trite. What can never grow stale is the new declaration of these truths in works of Art, or in the yearly renewal of Nature which inspires Art. Still, if you wish to stop 'showing' the truth in order to 'say' it—a mistake—don't drop bang off your Pegasus on to the floor. You do so because it is a mistake. The inspiration of the artist stops short so soon as he ceases to 'show' and begins to talk. 'These early days of elation in nature's every mood are better than all that follow in the ripe pageant of the year.' If it must be said, surely that is all that needs to be said?

I wish 'personality' had not been worked so hard of late, because it is the word for the thing in the preceding sentence. But I would drop the inverted commas; they remind one of the fact that the word is being constantly used.

The personality of the things that have been dead and still, is very wonderful and quite accounts for the religion of the ancient Romans. The grass and trees are not only alive, but obviously speaking to each other and, perhaps, to us. That, according to Mommsen, the wisest in some ways of men, is how poetry and religion began. But in this he merely chronicles the sound common-sense of the Romans. 'The earliest chant,' he writes, 'in the view of the Romans, was that which the leaves sang to themselves in the green solitude of the forest. The whispers and pipings of the 'favourable spirit' (*faunus* from *favere*, to favour) in the grove were reproduced to men, by those who had the gift of listening to him, in rhythmically measured language.' My dear, you have the gift of listening to the favourable spirit that speaks when the wind is among the new leaves, and you can tell the world what Faunus says

in rhythmical language. That is why you will have your niche.

So Hooray! But are not the celandines '*garnished* gold' rather than '*burnished*.' So many things are '*burnished* gold,' even in jewellers' shops. And are not the crocuses over? Your bee must search farther afield.

SAUGHTON, 11 Sept. 1900.

Your 'Book of Peace' has been almost too much for me. Sibell handed it to me at dinner and I read it through incontinently, first the poetry, then the prose. It is very beautiful, full of sorrow and of wisdom and of the joy which they make when truly married. The 'Guido Cavalcante' is too desperately excruciating. It haunts me. I used to know, and had forgotten it. But the English of the 'King's Bible' keeps tramping by in gorgeous austerity and brave compassion; the erect and beneficent army of the Word, conquering and saving, with the awe and pity of many swords. The 'True Beneficence' of the Bible does in truth reflect the image of the One God who made this world.

You have washed the Gates of Life—that is to say Birth and Death—from the insolent and vapid scribblings with which they have been defaced. That people should try to be funny over procreation and succeed in being mawkish over Death, stamps our rotten age, in which no child may be born innocent and no man die like a gentleman.

Too many now insult life, which is birth and death, with a music-hall bravado, and then . . .

'Like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.'

Our contemporaries know no mean between a hyaena and a weeping willow.

But let us read your book and forget them; with their impatience and weariness and despair; their giggle over birth and their snivel over death. We will read your book and take an oath never to defile our faces, God's Image, with a grin or a sob. These nervous contractions over the feast of Life are as

disgusting as the noises of a glutton whose voracity and repletion are alike audibly inconvenient.

It is a good book, full and sharp, with the sweet-bitterness of Birth and Death, and, for having composed it, you shall be honoured with the name of Dulcemara. Ever your devoted brother,

GEORGE.

12.9.00.

P.S. I have read over my midnight sally at the sniggering and gulping of the day; the 'rictus' and 'singultus' of 'deboshed' sensibility.

So bless you! for your book and for the letter you wrote on my Birthday.

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